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THE

MAN OF FORTUNE,

AND

OTHER TALES.

BY MRS GORE,

AUTHORESS OF 'MRS ARMITAGE,' 'STOKESHILL PLACE,' ETC.

erine Grace Frances (Moody) Gore

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
ANGO, OR THE MERCHANT PRINCE	1
THE QUEEN'S COMFIT MAKER, A LEGEND OF TOTTENHAM CROSS	87
THE YOUNG SOLDIER, OR MILITARY DISCIPLINE	149
A LUCKY DOG	173
THE FATAL WINDOW	203
THE RAILROAD	229
THE MARINERS OF THE POLLET	283

535174

ANGO, OR THE MERCHANT PRINCE.

PART I.

NORMANDY may be numbered among the countries which have sent forth their people to conquer and colonize, leaving the fatherland to degenerate into insignificance. The magnificence of its ruined castles and venerable cathedrals attests the ancient importance of the Duchy; and there are episodes of its history, during the middle ages, tinctured with the wildest characteristics of romance.

The power and glory of the maritime republics of Italy, as recorded by historians, would probably

appear fabulous, but for the survival of those marble palaces, whose mildewed galleries and echoing halls attract the wanderings of the traveller to the Lagunes of Venice, or the Bay of Genoa. The romantic history of the Foscari and the Dorias, is more authentically writ in marble than in historical annals; and even the memory of Venetian Doges, personally insignificant, is embalmed in the choicest sanctuaries of poetry and art. But what remains in the paltry unaspiring little town of Dieppe to inspire belief in the legend that, while Wolsey was immortalizing himself in England, as the founder of colleges and patron of Holbein, a simple burgess of a poor fishing-town of Normandy not only raised himself to princely opulence by the boldness of his commercial speculations, but had the courage to make war, single-handed, upon the King of Portugal; and the refinement to procure artists from Italy for the adornment of his villa upon the rugged Norman coast? Such, however, were the feats of John Ango; who, in the year 1530, had brought the port of Dieppe into a condition rivalling that of the maritime republics, and his name into competition with the names of Doges and Kings.

Ango was a native of the little borough so largely indebted to his munificence.—The only son of a rich shipowner, who had raised himself, by industry, from the humble condition of a mariner of the Pollet, young Ango was despatched by his father, at an early age, on various expeditions, likely to rouse, in an enterprising mind, the spirit of maritime adventure. It was the golden age of discovery. Every sovereign in Europe, and many independent states, were arming vessels, with a view of enlarging their possessions at the expense of the "dusky men of Ind," instead of their European neighbours; and Ango, while pursuing his father's mercenary speculations of traffic, became inspired with ardour to emulate the feats of Cabot or Columbus. From the middle of the fourteenth century—full sixty years before the commencement of the enterprises of Portugal—the port of Dieppe, in conjunction with the city of Rouen, had engaged in voyages of discovery and speculation on the Guinea coast. By them was the name of Cap Vert first bestowed upon the woody headland, afterwards distinguished by the Portuguese as Cape Verd; while the first European settlement formed in Africa, was named

Petit Dieppe, by the French discoverers, from a supposed resemblance to the position of their native town.

In 1402, Bethancourt, a Norman gentleman, conquered and proclaimed himself sovereign of the Canary Islands; and, in the East, the discovery of Sumatra was, about the same time, effected by Parmentier, a Dieppois captain, whose journals are still extant. But although discoveries and conquests may be effected by the enterprise of individuals, the resources of a sovereign state are indispensable to keep up the colonial establishments necessary to their preservation. The Dieppois adventurers, attacked by the armaments of the King of Portugal, were soon compelled to resign their Oriental conquests, and content themselves with bringing home, from the Guinea coast, cargoes of gold dust, pepper, and, above all, of elephants' teeth, which they were soon instructed to turn to such good account in carving and sculpture; their hereditary proficiency in which elegant art, still constitutes one of the chief resources of the town. There are carvings in ivory in existence, of the choicest beauty, known to have been produced by the Dieppois, in the reign of

Francis I; and their fine Gothic church of St Jacques still possesses a curious bas-relief of considerable length, bearing the date 1530, and composed of the figures of Indians, Asiatic and American; of negroes, and the natives of Madagascar; surrounded with characteristic attributes and the chief productions of their several countries; a relic which suffices to prove that the Dieppois were not only familiar with the aspect of the newly discovered countries, but that they possessed sculptors capable of perpetuating their configuration.

Thirty years previous to the erection of this curious trophy, the father of John Ango was the first to arm vessels for the formation of an establishment on the coast of Newfoundland. But, though baffled in his intentions of maintaining a permanent colony, he continued to despatch an annual fleet to the northern coasts; and, enriched by the monopoly of the cod fishery, soon attained such opulence as inspired the mind of his son with still higher ambitions. It was not enough that, from the windows of his father's rude mansion on the port of Dieppe, John Ango beheld his vessels ranged in order, with hundreds of mariners wearing on their sleeves the initials of his father,

engaged in unlading the precious commodities collected from different quarters of the world. On a recent expedition to the Levant, John Ango had been forced by stress of weather into an Italian port; and, profiting by the occasion, had visited, during the refitting of his dismasted vessel, the cities of Rome and Naples. The aspect of so much splendour, so much refinement, produced in a powerful mind, wholly uncultivated, a degree of excitement almost alarming. Dazzled, intoxicated, bewildered, John Ango lost sight of all but his personal gratification; and having surrendered the command of his father's merchant ship to a mate, his elder in years and experience and possessed of old Ango's confidence, he suffered the *Royal Charles* to proceed on its voyage.

The spell-bound youth resolved to live and die among the enchantments of Naples. To devote the high faculties he was conscious of possessing to the pursuit of serious study, was an effort beyond the philosophy of one-and-twenty. After passing his boyhood in traffic with the natives of Madagascar, Malacca, and Labrador, to be suddenly familiarized with the fine forms of Italy, the glories of ancient sculpture, and the awakening

beauties of a new era of triumph for the arts, was as the effect of enchantment. His life was now passed in frequenting the studios of those great painters whose names are familiar in the mouths of men as those of the greatest statesmen or conquerors; and in visiting the gorgeous fanes risen and rising under the auspices of the accomplished Princes of Italy. He beheld Florence, resplendent under the sceptre of the Medici, Milan, Genoa, Venice, Rome; and his young heart thrilled with luxurious delight at beholding surpassed the illusions of his boyish dreams.

Ango's first impulse, however, was that of grief and mortification, at knowing his destinies to be fixed in an inclement northern climate, in an impoverished province, among rude uncultivated men, destined to war with nature for their daily bread, to traverse trackless seas, and dispute with savages for the produce of more prolific countries. His next reflection was that of higher inspiration. He might become the father of his country, the Cosmo de Medicis of Dieppe. By the accumulation of still greater wealth, in addition to the fortunes of his father, he might acquire the power

of transporting to his northern home the arts and elegance of Italy.

It was an epoch of universal improvement. Charles V, Henry VIII, Francis I, were effecting for their several kingdoms, all that royal patronage *can* effect for the advancement of learning and civilization; and Ango, who, with deep pity for the rudeness of his countrymen, had the utmost faith in their capacity, doubted not that his exertions for the improvement of his native town would be crowned with success, if not in his own time, at least in that of a succeeding generation. Indignant rather than mortified at his ignorance, he determined to become the patron of the revival of letters and the arts in the Duchy of Normandy; the rival of his Sovereign Prince; nay, perhaps, himself an ennobled and dangerous subject. At present, he was but Ango the mariner, an individual disqualified to figure in the Courts of Kings. He would make himself heard of as an influencer of the destinies of mankind. He would command rather than solicit preferment. Such were the anticipations which, after the lapse of fourteen months, determined him to submit to

his father's decree, that he should either embark instantly at Leghorn, in a brig armed expressly for the purpose of bringing back the prodigal son; or forfeit all expectation of sharing with his sister Genevieve the fortunes of his family. Prepared for the parental reprobation he should have to encounter on landing at Dieppe, Ango summoned his patience to listen with becoming humility to the invectives of the coarse old seaman, his father, and the tedious homilies of a mother who retained the costume, habits, and language of a Poltaise; a tribe exhibiting, within bow-shot of the town of Dieppe, a peculiar dialect, dress, and mode of existence, attesting the truth of the legend, that the inhabitants of the Pollet are colonists from some Mediterranean port.

On arriving at home, however, the anticipations of the young truant were agreeably disappointed. He found, indeed, the same rude fare, the same bare walls, brick floor, and naked rafters; the pride of the rich shipowner being invested rather in the greatness of his argosies, than in the effeminacies of luxurious life. But he found no harshness—he met with no reproaches. Long absence pleaded powerfully in his favour. The

simple-hearted mother, who wept upon his neck, had feared never again to behold her only son; and it was impossible even for the iron-nerved old mariner to refrain from a tear of joy, when he looked upon the comely youth who had brought from more civilized cities a bearing and address, such as had never been seen in Dieppe, since Robert the Norman held his Court in the Castle of Arques.

There was one member of the family, meanwhile, who regarded the graces of the new comer with a less favourable eye. Genevieve Ango, unlettered as her mother, and strong-hearted as her father, was disposed to treat with contempt the new-fangled habits of life, of which even her intelligent brother's description could scarcely enable her to form a correct idea. With the prejudice of ignorance, Genevieve was a staunch opponent of all innovation. "Let us livē as our fathers lived," was the proverbial saying of one who saw not that the labours of the father are intended to improve the condition of the child. Ignorant of all beyond the walls of her native place, Genevieve was unable to estimate by their results the advantages of education and refine-

ment. She knew only that the forefathers of her parents had lived and died virtuous and respected, in the fear of God and veneration of the King, without greater knowledge of men or things than was to be gathered on the shores of the harbour, by the exercise of their eyes and ears. A more extended education she conceived to belong exclusively to the priesthood, to enable them the better to expound to their flock the mysteries of their salvation. The tales unfolded by her brother of the merchant Princes of Italy, with their marble palaces, their galleries of profane pictures and statues, and orchestras of profane music, Genevieve regarded with contempt. The chorus of Poltaise fishermen, on summer afternoons, comprised her notions of harmony; and as to carving and picture-making, to apply such luxurious arts to aught save the adornment of the altars of God and his saints, appeared to the simple-minded Dieppoise, flat blasphemy. At length, finding that his mother sat crossing herself, and that his sister listened with a contemptuous smile to his narratives of the wonders of Italy, he refrained from all further allusion to a theme so little suited to their apprehensions, and devoted

himself, heart and soul, to the furtherance of his father's commercial speculations. *There* lay his hopes of wealth, of aggrandisement, of happiness!

Old Ango, however, was not the man to listen to the suggestions of a stripling. Unskilled to appreciate the high intelligence of his son, the grey-headed Dieppois made it a point of religion to adopt none of the improvements suggested by the travels of his son. Just as his wife and daughter preferred listening to the wondrous tales of savage men, "gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire," brought back by Ango's captains from Mozambique or the Spice Islands, to all the descriptions of the Vatican, hazarded by their travelled kinsman, the old adventurer chose to adhere to the simple science of hydrography cultivated by the Norman sailors, rather than emerge into the novel principles imbibed by his son in the nautical schools of Genoa or Venice. With the old ways, he had prospered. By them his vessels had been enabled to confront the tornados and typhoons of tropical climates. His crews had evaded those floating mountains of ice, still as apocryphal to the conceptions of the greater part of Europe as modern tales of the sea-serpent or

kraken. He cared nothing to learn the processes of the dockyards of the Doges. The main point was to see his cargoes of codfish encumbering the market-place, and to find his rich bales of spices embalming the warehouses on the Pollet.

Reluctantly did John Ango cede to the dominion of parental authority. The good man, his father, waxed old. It was needless to fret his soul by opposition. The time would come when he should be at liberty to pursue, on a more extended and enlightened scale, the system which had rendered the name of Ango familiar in the ears of the merchants of the Eastern, and the adventurers of the Western hemispheres.

A stormy point, meanwhile, remained to be discussed between the father and son. It was the earnest desire of old Ango to behold the heir of his wealth wedded to the only child of one of the richest landowners in the neighbourhood of Dieppe ; nor did the disgust manifested by the accomplished traveller at the coarseness of mind and manners exhibited by the buxom Norman heiress, induce him to relinquish his purpose. Already the family quarrel ran high ; and Genevieve, to whom her brother had confided that a

love engagement in Italy rendered impossible the alliance projected by his family, made it a matter of conscience to apprize her brother that, in case of his persisting in his refusal, their father was likely to concentrate his riches in a single bequest to herself.—Even this menace availed not. John Ango felt that, with the helpmate provided for him, his ambitious projects would lose their charm; and he was on the point of breaking into open rebellion, when a fall in his own dockyard accelerated the end of the infirm old man. The elder Ango was conveyed to his eternal rest in the church of St Jacques; and the younger commenced a public career, which was to afford his name a permanent inscription in the annals of his native country.

The first anxiety of his sister arose from alarm lest her positive and somewhat arrogant brother might be tempted to visit upon the aged widow the part she had taken in promoting, by menaces and severity, a marriage distasteful to her son. She feared that the young man, on whom had devolved, according to the usance of the country, the entire inheritance of an intestate father, might be moved to eject from his new home the vene-

rable woman whose habits and opinions were so little in accordance with his own. Her brother differed so totally from herself in views and principles, that Genevieve could deduce no inference from the tone of her own feelings, and knew not to what extent his resentment might be carried. But that she feared he might suppose her solicitous for her own destinies, she would have hastened to implore him not to infringe the imperative duties of filial respect.

There was, however, nothing to fear. John Ango not only requested his mother to remain mistress of the establishment over which she had so long presided, but made an immediate deed of gift, conveying his ancestral house to his sister on the demise of their surviving parent, signifying his intention of erecting for himself a mansion in better accordance with the state of their altered fortune; and in a short period after his father's decease, not only were a dozen vessels of superior construction in progress in his dock-yard, but the foundations were already laid of that princely habitation which, till the bombardment of Dieppe, drew strangers from all countries

to admire the rich carving and emblazonments of the "House of Ango."

To the surprise of his fellow-townsmen, who already looked to him for support in all their public enterprises, Ango, instead of remaining on the spot to watch the progress of his property, was ever journeying to Rouen, to Caen, and even to Paris, for the prosecution of new commercial speculations.—Not satisfied with arming privateers, and despatching ships to every port of Europe or Asia, he contrived to recommend himself to the favour of the Archbishop of Rouen, the celebrated Cardinal d'Amboise; and obtained, through his recommendation at court, the monopoly of salt and grain, the comptrollership of the harbour of Dieppe, and other privileges of vast importance. He next undertook the receivérship of the revenues of the Duchy of Longueville, and farmed the Abbey lands of Fescamp and St Blaise, as well as those of various secular signiories of the Caux district. The prodigious command of money thus secured to him, placed all the markets of the neighbourhood in his hands: every day the population of Dieppe began to

feel itself more and more dependent on the good offices of Ango.

Unchanged in the courtesy of his deportment towards those who sought his protection, the young adventurer had already won golden opinions from his early associates. They admired his intelligence and energy, and took pride in his pretensions. It was but his sister Genevieve who trembled for the results of his audacity, not only as influencing his fortunes, but his character.

"Ango is growing too proud, and it is written that pride shall have a fall!" argued the Polletaise maiden. "What better is my brother than the mother who bore him, that he must needs have a dwelling-house carved with dainty devices, when one formed of the rough and rugged stone sufficeth his father's widow?—His garments are not fashioned like those of this country. His tongue affecteth a foreign idiom. I tremble for John Ango!—"

It was in the midst of such misgivings that she was accosted by the object of her reverie, who came to bid farewell to his family, as on the eve of a journey of importance.

"My homestead is all but complete," said he.

"The tapestry-makers appointed to furnish it for my use, will be here anon from Rouen. Have sometimes an eye to them, Genevieve, during my absence."

"I will take heed that there shall be neither wastery or riot among your people," replied Genevieve. "But——"

"Take heed rather that there be no sparing or parsimony to prevent my new habitation from becoming, as I would fain have it, a cage for a Phœnix, a new wonder of the world!" interrupted her brother. "I would have men say, as they steer into the harbour of Dieppe, I come to behold the palace of John Ango."

Genevieve shrugged her shoulders impatiently. "And whither are you bound, then," said she, "that you leave such grave charges in your sister's hands? To the Moluccas, in your good ship the *Salamander*, or to Siam in your *Royal Dieppois?* The season scarce holds for the north-western coast."

"Trouble not your mind for my goings or comings," interrupted her brother, with a smile. "My errand is simply to bring home a white dove of peace to my sea-gull's nest."

"You are bound to Italy, then!" cried Genevieve, starting up and clapping her hands; then suddenly relapsing into mournfulness—"I fancied—I trusted," quoth she, "that you had abandoned so mad a quest!"

"Abandon my every hope of earthly happiness?" cried the young man with enthusiasm. "Abandon *her* who, for the last three mortal years, hath been my dream by night, my thought by day? For whom but my Bianca have I reared yonder mansion? For whom but my Bianca have I striven to elevate my station and augment my means? But that I cared not to bring home a daughter of the noble house of Riario to a smoky hovel of Dieppe, already had I passed the Bay of Biscay to bear hither in our own fair galley the lovely lady of my thoughts. I chose not that my blessed Bianca should step upon a coarser footcloth than in her uncle's palace; and lo! my preparations are achieved—my plans complete. Within six weeks, dear Genevieve, I shall be here again, to place a sister in your gentle bosom."

"A sister who will despise both me and mine!" said Genevieve, in a tone of deep despondency.

"Nay, in lieu of gaining a sister, I shall perchance lose my brother. This daughter of a princely line may be influenced by the power of love to wed John Ango, the son of a Norman fisherman; but the impulse which blinds her to the humiliation of such an alliance, will not render her insensible to the homeliness of his family. She will despise the untutored mother, the unlettered sister; and our household happiness is gone for ever! Nay, although the persuasions of the voice she loves may have induced the damsel to overlook the distance between her high estate and that of her Norman suitor, when she comes hither and beholds him in active truth the mate of petty traders, the kinsman of humble mariners of the Pollet, she will surely grieve at having exchanged her patrician name for the degrading appellation of Madamė Ango!"

"Her husband may, perhaps, shortly achieve a more honourable title for her acceptance," rejoined Ango, turning lightly on his heel; and, before Genevieve could ask an explanation of his words, he had strained her in a parting embrace. During the tedious five months of his absence from Dieppe, often did she ponder over his saying.

But she had none to whom to turn for explanation. She could not call to mind that Ango was familiar with any. He was rather gracious than friendly towards his young fellow-townsmen. He vouchsafed them his aid, but never his confidence. With her mother, a woman of threescore years and ten, oppressed with infirmities, it was no longer possible to commune; and Genevieve chose rather to divert her thoughts from her brother's mysterious communication by watching over the completion of his splendid mansion, which was now constantly surrounded by an admiring throng of the Dieppois, clapping their hands, and crying aloud with exultation—"Ango—Ango!"

At length, one fine autumnal morning, signal was given in the port that the fine galley in which Ango had embarked for the Mediterranean, was in sight.—The next tide brought her into harbour; and the next hour the bridegroom into the arms of his sister, who was waiting in the porch of his dwelling to welcome the Italian bride. Ango's brow was for a moment crimsoned with vexation, to perceive that Genevieve, even on so momentous an occasion, had disdained to lay aside her uncouth Norman costume. But, on

glancing a second time towards her, he was fain to admit that the fine expressive turn of her countenance was sufficient adornment. At this moment, her eyes were fixed upon the person of her new sister-in-law with such rapt and intense admiration, that it was impossible for the young bridegroom to do less than press her a second time in his arms in token of gratitude.

The Lady Bianca was, in truth, the loveliest creature that had ever set foot on the Norman shore; and Genevieve no longer wondered at the repugnance which had prevented her brother from taking to his bosom the coarse-featured heiress of St Martin le Gaillard. The only fault which Ango's sister could detect, and it was a fault that necessarily increased in importance when they came to abide together, was the impossibility of reading the nature of her sentiments in her serene eyes and unvarying countenance. Imperturbable mildness, or, it might be, immovable resolution, seemed pictured in her gentle face. She gazed with a smile of unconcern upon the rich preparations completed for her reception; and the sanguine heart of Ango was disappointed when he saw how little that of his bride was interested in the gorge-

ous carvings and emblazonments which had taxed all the choicest artists of Normandy to bring them to perfection. He took no heed of the diminutive proportions of his dwelling, compared with the stately pride of the Palazzo Riario; or, that the walls of her uncle's house, instead of being adorned by quaint carvings in wood, shone with the luminous inspirations of Raphael and Leonardo. Even the exotic flowers, the orange and pomegranate blossoms, which Genevieve had procured at immense cost from Paris to impart to her new sister's bower chamber the fragrance and aspect of her native climate, were weeds in the Sicilian gardens of the father of Bianca.

There were objects, however, wholly new to the experience of the young stranger which soon captivated her attention. The Gothic magnificence of the old church of St Remy; the tall white cliffs at whose base the chafing tides of the northern seas threw up their snowy surf; the rich pastures of the pastoral valley of Arques, green and leafy, beyond all experience of the Neapolitan maiden; all these impressed her with some degree of admiration for the little Norman nook in which her future existence was to wear away.

But she felt that it *was* to "wear away." Tenderly attached to the enthusiastic Ango, she had made the sacrifice of her patrician splendours cheerfully; but not without the full consciousness of having made it. But she did not, for a moment, forget that she, who was the daughter of Prince Riario, the Sicilian noble, was now the wife of Ango, captain of a rude armament of Norman privateers.

PART II.

Ten years elapsed. The lovely bride of eighteen became the matron and mother of eight-and-twenty; and the dark-haired Genevieve, her elder only by a year, was now a nun among the sisters of St Mary, in a small convent on the shore, beside the fortress of the Pollet. It was not without deep regret that Ango beheld his only sister retire from the world in which his now miraculously advancing fortunes were become a wonder for the admiration of mankind. He had wished to see her nobly wedded; and not a few among the spendthrift seigneurs of Normandy had pretended to the hand of one so highly gifted by nature, and so lavishly endowed by her brother with worldly riches. But Genevieve was inflexible. Though conscious of no peculiar vocation

for the cloister, she felt that she was equally ill adapted for the struggles of the great world.

"There was a time," said she, in reply to the remonstrances of her brother, "when I flattered myself of being so strong in mind as to despise distinctions of rank or education. I confess my weakness. To persist in my resolution of wedding with one of my own degree, some rude captain of the port, is an effort of prudence of which I am no longer capable. But it is not your influence, dear brother, which hath wrought this change in my feelings. Your ambitions appear to me now, as heretofore, monstrous and disproportionate. It is rather the society of my sweet sister, the converse, the instruction, the acquirements I have derived from her affectionate care, that have placed me in a false position. My soul is no longer able to find its happiness in the society of the rude and simple-minded, who are my own people; while the lowness of my birth equally disqualifies me for any higher alliance. The nobles, with one of whom you urge me to wed, would one day or other afflict me by some contumelious expression; while I, in some hasty moment, might be moved to

reproach the want of breeding and information of him who was my childhood's playmate, and whom I long purposed should become my husband. All these harassments will cease when, devoted to the service of God, I pass my future days between the charitable duties undertaken by the sisters of Mary, and the studies to which the rules of the order permit me to apply my leisure."

Such were the explanations given by Genevieve to her family; and Ango and his wife were too well acquainted with the sternness of her resolution, to have any hope of swaying her from her purpose. It was some comfort that she had chosen the least rigorous of the orders established in Normandy, which sanctioned their admittance to her presence on days set apart for the purpose; and, as the convent was within view of the magnificent habitation in which Ango now abided, or rather reigned like a prince, scarcely a week elapsed but one of her kindred, in flowing robes of earthly pride, sat beside the poor nun in her cell of humiliation.

Dear to her heart, even in its abstraction from the things of this world, were those continued tokens of affection; more especially, now that

Ango's young son was advancing in boyhood; and when, accompanied only by the preceptor, who, being alien to the recluse, was forced to leave him on the threshold of the cloister, young Theodore came to visit her, apparently intent upon seeking from her lips lessons of wisdom likely to afford an antidote to the evil influences with which pride and ostentation had surrounded his infancy, Sister Genevieve's heart expanded with joy. The boy seemed to flee to the counsels of the mild and tranquil nun, as a refuge from the vain tumults of his father's house. The happiest day of his week was that on which he was ferried across the harbour, and conducted to the humble portal of the sisters of St Mary. How strange a contrast to the marble vestibule, thronged with menials wearing the liveries and cognizance of Ango, through which he had to pass on his return!

Soon, however, Sister Genevieve began to fear that her growing influence over her nephew was distasteful to his mother; for already her high-born sister-in-law was relaxing in her attentions to the recluse. More than a month sometimes elapsed between her visits; but how was it to be wondered at? The nun, in her gentle forbear-

ance, reminded herself how hard it must be to Bianca to tear herself from her luxurious tiring-chamber, with its velvet hangings, Venetian mirrors set in frames of silver filigree, carpets of rich tapestry, and ceilings of carved and emblazoned oak, to descend into the damp and naked cell of a convent! She fancied she could behold Bianca seated by her bower-window, while two girls of Mozambique (brought over by one of Ango's captains as a tribute to his lady and mistress) stood behind her chair, to pick up the book or tapestry-needle she might let fall, or, in the summer heats, to raise a gentle air around her with their Indian fans. She fancied she saw her at the banquet table, with minstrels and trouveres in attendance, according to the custom of the house, singing strains in homage to her beauty. She fancied she saw her before her stately toilet-table, while goldsmiths, summoned from Paris by Ango, tried upon her velvet bodice or damasked coif the effect of certain sparkling clasps of diamonds and rubies, which her husband had bespoken as toys to amuse her leisure.

"Pray Heaven so much prosperity harden not her heart!" was the secret ejaculation of Sister

Genevieve. "Of all the trials which beset our mortal nature, the ordeal of riches and greatness is the most perilous to salvation. It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for persons endowed like Ango and his wife to enter into the kingdom of heaven!"

With one evidence of her brother's growing riches and growing pride, the poor nun was at present unacquainted. Having purchased from the ruined family of Longueil their beautiful signiory of Varengeville, on the shore, two leagues below Dieppe, Ango had demolished the ruinous old castle, the residence, in more troublous times, of the lords of the soil; and was erecting, in its stead, a fair manor-house of stone and marble, after the manner of the Italian villas he had admired in his travels; to execute the frescos and sculptures for which he had brought sculptors from Rome; not satisfied with the artists who were executing, at Fontainbleau and St Germain en Laye, for his sovereign lord the King, those fine works which have come down to our time. Ango, the Dieppois, chose that the inspired country of his lovely wife should furnish the devices and adornings of a dwelling which was to be bestowed

upon her as a dower-house for her especial use. The incongruity of these refinements with a rude Norman village, overgrown with huge timber-trees, and overrun by luxuriant vegetation, so that no cool refreshment of marble or fountains was needed as in the burning climate of the Sicilies, did not occur to him. It was the vain display of magnificence to which he aspired, rather than the comfort of the future dwellers at Varengeville.

As yet, Ango had said nothing to his sister of his new manor-house; partly from motives of delicacy, because he suspected that, had Genevieve consented to ally herself with the nobility to her native province, of all the suitors for her hand, the unfortunate Baron de Longueil would have been the object of her preference; and partly because he feared that her simple taste would reprove the newfangledness of his notions. But the boy Theodore told all. Enchanted with the beauty of the ancient groves and new gardens of Varengeville, he loved to describe to his aunt the progress of the foreign artists, and the narratives of the marvels of Italy, of which his familiarity with his mother's language enabled him to converse with the strangers.

"Be not deceived," was the reply of the nun; "the things you tell of, which Ango would fain naturalize in Normandy, are unsuitable to our boisterous province. These images of heathen deities, planted on pedestals among thickets of flowers, may be appropriate in a climate where scarcely a gentle breeze disturbs the ethereal tranquillity of the spot, and the landscape is as a temple consecrated to Divine nature. But here, amid our ocean tempests, when, on awaking in the morning, we find dwellings swept away by the raging of midnight winds which in the evening were left steadfast and secure, what rational being would set up, on slender pedestals, vases and statues to be overthrown? These painted frescos of Varengeville, which artists have travelled thousands of leagues to create, must soon be encrusted with mildew, the spontaneous growth of our humid climate; and scornful men will point the finger thereat, and deride the short-sightedness of Ango. As well attempt to cultivate the vines of Gascony upon our cliffs, as naturalize the villeggiatura of a Sicilian atmosphere on our coast."

Young Theodore listened gravely to the argu-

ments of the nun. The pleasure he had hitherto taken in the decoration of his father's noble manor, was moderated by this exposition of the unfitness of things apparent at Varengeville; nor was this the only point on which the lessons of Sister Genevieve countervailed those of the parents of the boy. Bianca, elevated by her husband's eminence, as chief citizen of Dieppe and master of a vast armament of privateers, to a condition even more distinguished than that of the daughter of a Neapolitan noble, having resumed her early habits of arrogance, failed not to instil into her son the notion that, on his mother's side, he was come of a princely house; and that, by following up the enterprises and courtiership of his father, he might in time achieve, in his own person, the honours of nobility; while the nun, at once humble and high-minded, bad him hold himself above such empty distinctions, and regard mere opulence as a treasure entrusted to his stewardship for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, and the honour of God.

It was her delight to perceive that the learning and accomplishments instilled into her nephew, by the professors enlisted in Ango's service, served

to enlighten and strengthen the mind of the promising youth, without hardening his heart. All her earthly hope was in Theodore. Her brother she looked upon as carried away by the vastness of his ambitions; a vessel freighted beyond its strength, and in hourly peril of shipwreck.

Such was the frame of her mind when, just as Theodore attained the eve of his eighteenth year, Ango, who now rarely visited his sister, made his appearance one evening in her cell. Splendid as were now his habits and his garb, Genevieve was startled when, on raising her eyes from the work in which she was engaged (a stole, embroidered with chain needlework, for the service of the altar of St Remy), she saw the stately citizen standing beside her, wearing, in a belt of gold, a dagger, the hilt of which was studded with jewels. A thought glanced into Genevieve's mind of their poor humble father, who, in the extremity of his wealth, had aspired to nothing beyond the leathern belt and doublet of broad blue cloth, peculiar to the burghers of Dieppe. Silk, velvet, or brocade, he would have treated as effeminate trivialities, unworthy the notice of a man of the sea.

"Whither comest thou, so bravely attired?" said the nun, her eyes having fallen again upon her work, so that she had not space to notice that the joyous and triumphant expression of her brother's countenance was more than in accordance with the brilliancy of his garments.

"From the Town-Council," replied Ango, taking a seat beside her; a stool of simple deal, differing strangely from the rich cushions of Genoa velvet, forming his habitual resting-place.

"And how long hath it been the custom for the Town-Council of this poor port of Dieppe to deliberate in robes and trappings of velvet and jewels, touching the price of cod-fish or the duty upon herrings?"—demanded Sister Genevieve, unable to repress some degree of vexation at the unseemly pomps and vanities displayed by her brother.

"We met upon no such skipperlike matters," cried Ango, too much engrossed in his self-satisfaction to take note of her unwonted bitterness; "but for a discussion that ought to have penetrated with joy the dull cold walls of the very prison thou hast chosen for thyself.—The

King, dear sister, the King is about to visit Dieppe!"—

"Heaven send him a happy journey!" replied Genevieve, devoutly crossing herself; "and incline his royal heart, when here, to lend that aid to the charitable and religious institutions of the city, of which they stand so greatly in need."

Ango's brow darkened. It was his pleasure to be thought a munificent patron of the institutions of Dieppe; and, till engrossed by the progress of his manor and the vastness of his speculations, had, in truth, been held so by the world.

"If the convent of the sisters of St Mary stand in need of benefactions," said he, haughtily, "there are those among the burghers of the city both able and willing to relieve its necessities, without need of troubling our lord the King with its petty necessities. Nevertheless, it strikes me that, for a provincial convent, having, moreover, but a single ward for the relief of the sick, and a single day of the week set apart for doles to the poor, the dowry brought to its treasury by the sister of Ango, might have preserved it from immediate want!"

"I speak not of this poor house," replied

Genevieve, mildly; "seeing that, thanks to thy generosity, it is endowed with ampler income and higher immunities than any other in Dieppe. Nay, with my brother's leave, I will speak of none other, since the subject is distasteful. Say,—when comes King Francis to our walls; and with what honours will the town welcome so illustrious a guest?"—

"With none. The town will do nothing!" replied Ango, significantly.

"How?" cried Genevieve, reddening under her wimple and veil, for shame to think that her native place should be dishonoured in the eyes of the King.

"An individual hath already taken upon himself the duty of welcoming his Sovereign," resumed Ango.

"*Thyself!*" replied the nun, exultingly, but with an anxious expression of countenance. "Yet bethink thee, Ango, what envyings and heart-burnings thy pretensions to so great a distinction will bring upon thee!"

"I think of nought but the glory of standing host to the King of France!" cried Ango, with increasing exultation. "I think of nought but to

have it said, from frontier to frontier, Francis I was prisoner to the Emperor, friend to Harry of England, scholar to Bayard, and guest to Ango,—Ango the Norman mariner,—Ango the privateer !"

The name of her father and brother thus proudly proclaimed, excited a transient feeling of triumph in the soul of the nun. The next moment, she reproached herself with her fault; admitting that, even were Ango's ambition excusable, HER vocation forbad all participation in his pride. But while Genevieve was rebuking herself by inward recitation of a penitential psalm, Ango proceeded to unfold that his house and household were to be placed forthwith at the disposal of his Majesty; how a guard of honour, formed of the crews of his vessels then in port, completely armed with brave accoutrements, was to await the King's coming a league from the town, and attend upon his Majesty during his sojourn.

" My patron, Cardinal d'Amboise, is to be in attendance upon the King," said he, "as well as the chief barons and seigneurs of the province, betwixt this and Rouen. All these will have

bed and board under my roof, such as they have rarely seen, save under that of the Louvre. On the first day of their coming, they will be entertained with a gorgeous banquet, and a choice concert of music. On the second, my royal guest purposeth to inspect the harbour; and a joust upon the water, performed by my own people, will diversify the scene. On the third, being the Sabbath, high mass must be performed in the church of St Jacques, by my lord the Cardinal Archbishop, assisted by the clergy of his pontificate; and on the fourth, a review of the forces will take place in the valley of Arques, crowned by a festival of fireworks, and other ingenious devices of masquing and music, in which the King is said to take especial delight."

"And the cost of these regal entertainments is to be defrayed by thy single self?" demanded Genevieve.

"How better mark my sense of gratitude to God for the greatness of his bounties, than by testifying my reverence towards the anointed of his creatures?" replied Ango, proudly.

"By bestowing the same vast gratuity upon

his creatures less prosperous," argued the nun, devoutly crossing herself. "The vast outlay thou dost contemplate, would endow an hospital—a monastery; nay, raise from its foundation-stone, a cathedral great as the Rouennais church of St Ouen, in honour of thy blessed patron, St John."

"Thou knowest that I have already issued instructions for a rich chapel to his honour in my parochial church of St Jacques du Haut Pas, besides ten thousand marks contributed to that of St Remy," said Ango, drily. "With respect to monasteries and hospitals, it strikes me that the sick and the men of religion, are already as well cared for in Dieppe as the condition of our city requireth."

"A proof, were proof wanting," replied Genevieve, sternly, "that it is thine own glory, and not the glory of God, thou are seeking to advance, in thine intended homage to the King of France."

"By propitiating his Majesty with a noble welcome," observed Ango, evading the question, "I may haply secure for the port and harbour of Dieppe those royal favours which have raised

Havre du Grace, Nantes, and La Rochelle, to their present high prosperity."

"Say, rather, that thou mayst peradventure secure to thyself tokens of royal favour in thy personal ennoblement," said the nun; "for after such things, O my brother! doth thine heart aspire far more than after the self-contentment of virtue."

"I know not why the love of virtue should inspire contempt for the high condition and estate in which virtue is most memorably practised," retorted Ango. "I do not deny that I would fain elevate my son to the rank in life of his maternal ancestors. The stateliest tree hath its root; and proud were I to plant an acorn from which the sapling may send forth branches to flourish in after ages, and overshadow the earth. But enough of my projects. When from the belfry of their temple the holy sisters of St Mary look down upon the pageants with which, by sea and land, Ango rejoiceth to recreate the eyes of his Sovereign, be it thy holy task, beloved Genevieve, to breathe an orison for thy brother, that his soul be not unworthily elated by the honours of the day."

Sister Genevieve waited not the coming of the King to fulfil the behest of her brother. Daily, hourly, did she weary Heaven with intercessions in behalf of Ango; as a man who, placing his delight and glory in the things of the world, was more especially at the mercy of the sports and gusts of fortune.

PART III.

The dwelling-house of Ango,* on the port of Dieppe (not far from that ancient tower whose venerable walls, still standing, attest the valour of the English assailants, under their captain, the renowned John Talbot), albeit fashioned, according to the fashion of the time and country, of wood alone, was of surpassing magnificence. The façades towards both the sea and the gardens, and the courts of the double quadrangle, were exclusively of oak, carved with the utmost skill in devices, representing the fables of Æsop, and striking episodes in the history of Normandy. Around the state floor, ran an overhanging balcony, com-

* In 1647, Cardinal Barberini, on visiting the House of Ango with the Pères de l'Oratoire, observed—"*Nunquam vidi domum ligneam pulchrioram.*"

manding, on one side, extensive views of the ocean, on the other, of the rich valley of Arques; and into the terrace, or balcony, opened the wide windows of a fine saloon and noble gallery, hung with stained leather, with ceilings and wainscoting carved and gilt, and enchased pictures of the Italian masters. In these magnificent apartments, of which the floors were inlaid with rare Indian wood susceptible of the highest polish, were displayed musical instruments of the most exquisite workmanship, chalices and goblets of agate and crystal, and ebony cabinets containing cameos and medals of immense value.

On dismounting at the gate of the rich burgher of Dieppe, on whom he was to confer the honour of becoming his guest, Francis I received, with graceful courtesy, the obsequious homage of Ango; but when, having traversed the hall, and ascended the carved staircase on footcloths of scarlet velvet of Genoa, his Majesty reached the gallery, where he beheld, for the first time, the productions of Leonardo da Vinci, he was silent with surprise. A sentiment almost resembling pique against so luxurious a subject, seemed to render him insensible to the laborious efforts of his host. Ne-

vertheless, on entering the saloon, where the Lady Bianca rose from the chair of state at his approach, and, with an air of mingled dignity and humbleness, sank upon her knee to mark the cession of her place to her royal visitor, gallantry suspended every other feeling; and, hastening towards her to raise her from the ground, he imprinted, in the movement, a respectful kiss upon her pale and lofty forehead, and signified to Ango that of all the jewels and chef-d'œuvres contained in his house, the fairest was before him. By his royal will, the wife of Ango took her seat at his right hand during the banquet that was now magnificently served up before the King.

"The name of Pavia hath ill-inclined me towards all that reminds me of Italy," said Francis, at the close of a feast graced with the rarest viands and most delicate wines (addressing himself to Cardinal d'Amboise, who was honoured with a place at his royal table); "nevertheless, this day, my mind seems fated to receive its most pleasurable impressions from objects imported into my kingdom from my royal mother's native country. First, a lady hostess, whose graces of person and deportment would shed lustre upon the Louvre;

secondly, pictures of such moving excellence that I could loiter away weeks in contemplation before them; and, lastly, these goblets and salvers, whose chasing as far exceeds the art evinced by my clumsy goldsmiths of Paris, as the rich pastures of the valley of Arques, yonder, exceed the sandy plain of Grenelle. Cellini, didst thou call him?" pursued the King, addressing himself to the delighted Ango.

"Benvenuto Cellini, Sire," replied the burgher, who was in humble attendance behind the royal chair.

"I pray you, Master Ango, have the fellow written to," resumed the King; "I must have him forthwith complete a cupboard of plate for the private apartments of my palace of Fontainbleau. Let him hasten to France. I will no longer allow so choice an artist to remain obscure."

"I crave your Majesty's pardon, in presuming to assert that the name of Benvenuto Cellini is already illustrious," replied Ango, bending one knee as he tendered anew to the King a richly embossed goblet of ivory and gold, containing rare wine of Cyprus. "The cunning goldsmith is of the household of the Duke of Tuscany; and may

not, for his life, quit Italy. It was only by vast bribery and continual entreaty, that I procured from Master Benvenuto his acceptation of my commission for the execution, at by-hours and by stealth, of the buffet of which your Majesty deigns to express such high commendation."

A smile stole upon the handsome lip of Francis, at the idea that a subject of his kingdom, a burgher of his poor town of Dieppe, should affect to treat, as unattainable to his Sovereign, the object he had overmastered! He promised himself in silence to treat with Master Cellini, forthwith, through the intervention of one of his diplomatic agents in Italy, rather than through that of the overweening captain of privateers; little witting that the eccentric sculptor, the spoiled child of pontiffs and sovereigns, was still more difficult to deal with than the bold and ambitious Ango.

On the day following his arrival, Francis was roused, soon after sunrise, by strains of exquisite music, from minstrels posted in the gardens beneath the royal lodging; for Ango, desirous that his illustrious guest should behold, under its fairest aspect, the harbour of the town that courted his favour, would not (even to prolong

the slumbers of Francis, in the right regal couch prepared for his repose) forfeit the occasion of the morning-tide, which was now rippling at high mark, in summer waves of glassy green, against the granite coping of the quays.

"The weather keeps faith with us, my courteous host," cried his Majesty, when, on the completion of the royal toilet, Ango kneeled humbly at his feet to offer the morning draught of the King; together with a manchet of fair white bread, served in a goblet and salver of gold, more richly sculptured than those which had attracted his admiration the preceding day. "A fairer day could not have prospered my design of familiarizing myself with a new element. Let us take water, I beseech you, while the tide holds to favour our marine adventures."

Had Ango found space to glance round the circle of courtiers, who had accompanied the King upon his expedition to review the newly-raised legions of Normandy, he would have admired to see many a warlike cheek was pale at the mere idea of embarkation; so little are the French habituated to the maritime pursuits to which the English are from childhood accustomed. But the

Dieppois was too deeply absorbed in the honour of stepping at the King's right hand through his own gorgeous apartments, and down his emblazoned staircase of state, to have heed of the weaknesses of his companions.

The first circumstance that diverted his attention, was a sudden exclamation of delight from the lips of the King, on emerging from the threshold; facing which, towards the harbour, a triumphal arch of great beauty and magnificence (previously prepared) had been erected in the course of the night, adorned with pictures and bas-reliefs, commemorating the chivalrous triumphs of the royal visitor!

"*Mort de Dieu*, Sir Ango!" cried Francis, his cheek flushing with pride and pleasure, "this is truly a princely token of homage! Many of royal blood might take lesson of my trusty merchant of Dieppe in the noble art of hospitality!"

Ango, who, cap in hand, was escorting the royal *cortège* to the shore, had soon the further gratification of beholding his Sovereign's eye rest with wonder and admiration upon a flotilla of six elegant galleys, nobly adorned and sculptured for

the occasion, bearing the banner of France, and on the prow the initials of John Ango; built at his sole cost, in his private dockyard, for the purpose of doing honour to the visit of his Sovereign. As the little fleet with its illustrious freight, issued from the harbour and put out to sea, the armed vessels of Ango, lying at anchor to the number of sixteen, sent forth a thundering salute to their Lord and King, answered by shouts and acclamations from thousands lining the shore towards the Point d'Ailly; the whole population of the district having poured forth to gaze upon their Prince. Cries of "Long live the King!" "*Vive François I.!*" "*Vive Ango!*" resounded along the cliffs of Normandy.

From the humble belfry of the sisters of St Mary, another prayer ascended at that moment of triumph, to the Tribunal of Grace. Sister Genevieve, leaning against the parapet, which commanded a view of the ocean and the gallant convoy whose gay pennons streamed in the breeze, was unable to repress an exclamation of "*Vive Ango!*"—adding, in a lower voice, "and grant him strength, O Lord! to bear with humility, this fearful load of greatness."

Ango's honours, however, ripe as they seemed, were even that very day destined to unhoped for augmentation. The Lady Bianca, as from the balcony of her golden gallery she watched the manœuvring of the galleys, and after several hours' excursion along the coast their return to the harbour, was startled by the hurried gallop of a horseman, who, on arriving at her gate, she recognised by the golden greyhound in his cap, as a pursuivant, or royal courier, bringing despatches from the capital. Such a messenger had already made his appearance in Dieppe, to notify to Ango the arrival of the King.—What was this new courier to announce to Francis?—

As the galleys entered the harbour, piloted by the *Royal Francis* (the vessel fitted up exclusively for the King), the wife of Ango observed that the pursuivant, though way-worn and travel-stained, persisted in approaching within the lines formed by the burgher-guard of Dieppe on either side the arch of Triumph; as if intent upon obtaining access to Francis the moment of his arrival, and previous to his re-entering the house of Ango. An inexplicable emotion took possession of her bosom. She

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could not but fancy that the arrival of the confidential courier, on whom her husband had bestowed a princely gratuity for the good tidings of which he was formerly the bearer, imported further good to Ango.

Again did the acclamations of the gay multitude assembled along the quay and lining the windows and balconies of every house within view, rend the summer air with their joyous echoes; so that the music of the minstrels, greeting the return of the King, could scarcely be heard for the cries and vivats of the throng. Still, Bianca's eyes remained intently fixed upon the royal galley. She saw that Francis (while, removing his plumed cap from his noble brow, he bowed low and gracefully, in acknowledgment of the salutations of the fair Dieppoises) had caught sight of his messenger; and that the moment the King set foot on the quay, his first movement was to extend his hand to receive the despatches of which he seemed to know his pursuivant to be the bearer. At such a distance, it was impossible for the anxious lady to read the expression of the King's countenance as he perused the documents placed before him; but while, in trembling silence, she

stood viewing the scene, she saw the King (having completed the perusal of the scroll) beckon towards him the son of his host; and was lost in amazement to behold young Theodore, after kneeling a moment at the feet of his Sovereign, repeat, in presence of the thousands assembled, the same ceremony towards his father. Again, shouts arose from the people, of which Bianca was unable to interpret the meaning. Her eyes were dim with tears as she gazed upon the graceful figure of her son, who rose from his knee and stood beside his father, face to face with the sovereign prince on whose brilliant accoutrements the evening sun was shedding its refulgent brightness. She beheld only those three—the King—Theodore—Ango;—her sovereign, her son, her husband!

Soon, however, officious friends thronged in to prepare her for the intelligence she was about to receive from the lips of Francis. The scroll of parchment she had seen delivered by his Majesty to the hands of his munificent host, contained letters-patent of nobility, constituting the burgher Ango and his heirs for ever, Viscounts of the kingdom of France!

But even this was not all. The recent death of the Sieur de Manroy having left vacant the government of Dieppe, in the hearing of the whole population, Francis I. called upon the municipality of the town to do homage to his representative, Viscount Ango, as Captain Commandant of the Castle and Garrison of Dieppe!

PART IV.

The lowliness of gratitude with which these royal favours were acknowledged, served to cement the good-will subsisting between the Sovereign and his subject. Scarcely had winter re-assembled the courtiers of Paris under the groined roofs of the Louvre, when the Viscount and his lovely lady were among the favoured guests of the King;—and Bianca, of whom such scenes were the natural atmosphere, had the gratification of displaying the rich jewels and Oriental stuffs, lavished upon her by her husband, in rivalship with the splendours of the royal favourite, Diane de Poitiers, at that moment in the zenith of her charms.

It was whispered, however, among the courtiers, that it was neither to execute the registries of his patent of nobility, nor even to figure in the

pageants of the court, that Ango visited the capital. The rich burgher had long acted as auditor to the Cardinal Archbishop of Rouen, and by prudent management, doubled the revenues of his see; and it was now surmised that Francis himself, whose wars had exhausted his treasury in the earlier portion of his reign, was fain to mortgage to the Governor of Dieppe, in exchange for a loan of considerable amount, his crown lands in Normandy and the adjacent province.

Certain it was, that though Ango was known to have claimed a military escort for the transport of a considerable treasure to the capital, the troop was at once dismissed in Paris: the Lady Bianca's litter being escorted, on their return to Dieppe, by his own people only. Yet so far from his revenues being diminished by this transfer of property, never had Ango's speculations been bolder, or his habits more magnificent, than during the ensuing year. Under his government, the castle and fortifications underwent complete reparation; the harbour and jetty were improved; and the city gates restored and crowned with towers. The beautifully sculptured treasury and winding staircase, still extant, in the Church of St Jacques

du Haut Pas, were a tribute from the munificence of Ango; and the Chapel of St John, in that of St Remy, was dedicated to his patron saint, by the new Viscount. On every side, were to be seen proofs of his liberal zeal for the benefit of his native city. It sufficed for Ango to address a petition to the King, for his desires and those of his fellow-townsmen to be granted; the importance of such a subject being thoroughly appreciated by Francis, who had been right glad to seek assistance from Ango, in arming the Channel fleet equipped at Havre, Honfleur, and Dieppe, to prevent the English from fortifying the town of Boulogne. For the Governor of Dieppe was no longer the petty trader, the owner of a poor squadron of merchant vessels, but the haughty master of twenty sloops of war! More than once, the crews of his merchantmen, trading with the Moluccas and the coast of Malabar, had come to serious disputes with the Spanish, Flemish, and, above all, the Portuguese settlers, jealous of his pretensions; and in several severe engagements with foreign frigates, the star of Ango had prevailed, and his people come off victorious.

On one disastrous occasion, however, a vessel belonging to one of his fleets, having been separated, by stress of weather, from her convoy, fell into the hands of the Portuguese, already incensed against the noble mariner of Dieppe by former successes; when the crew was inhumanly massacred, and the vessel, with its rich cargo, steered in triumph into the Tagus.

Furious at his loss, and still more irritated by the insult which he had the arrogance to conceive was offered to his flag, Ango swore to be revenged; and, having issued orders for the arming of his ten finest vessels, with eight others of inferior size, and, in addition to their crews, about a thousand men, mercenaries attached to his service, he prepared to make a descent upon the coast of Portugal, and retaliate the injury he had sustained.

The expedition sailed; and the first intelligence of its safe arrival in the Tagus brought also to the delighted Ango news of perfect success. Several villages on the banks of the Tagus had been ravaged and destroyed by his men; and the conflagration of one of these, within a league of Lisbon, struck terror into the

inhabitants, unable to comprehend such an attack on the part of Frenchmen, the allies of their King.

A still greater panic, however, was excited, when several valuable Indiamen, falling in with Ango's vessels, which were cruising at the mouth of the harbour, were instantly captured. Unable to believe such an exploit the work of privateers, the Portuguese government, regarding it as a declaration of hostilities on the part of Francis I, despatched a deputation to the palace of Chambord, where the King was residing, to demand the cause of so gross a violation of international law.

For some time, the King of France attached little faith to the representations of these delegates. Satisfied that no hostile instructions had been issued by his Admiralty, and that, without such orders, the boldest captain of his fleet would not, on any provocation, proceed to acts of violence, he attempted to persuade the Count d'Olivares, and the noble gentlemen by whom he was accompanied, that the whole statement originated in misconception. On learning, however, from the Ambassador-Extraordinary, that the flag

under which these outrages were committed, bore for ensign and device, a sphere, or terrestrial globe, surmounted by a crucifix, with the legend —"*Spes mea Deus, â juventute meâ,*" Francis recognised at once the blazon of the Governor of Dieppe.

"'Tis Ango who hath taken this quarrel on his hand!" cried the King, turning towards his astonished courtiers. "'Tis Ango who hath declared war against the King of Portugal!"—

Count d'Olivares, with an obsequious obeisance, ventured to demand of his Majesty in what quarter of the world the dominions of the said King Ango might be situated; and, had not a violent burst of laughter from the King testified to the assembled courtiers, that his Majesty was disposed to make the arrogance of the Dieppois captain a matter of merriment, they were prepared to treat the presumption of their countryman as a treasonous offence against the crown.

"Be pleased to inform my good brother of Portugal," said the King, perceiving the ambassadors to be both astonished and mortified by his mirth, "that I trust nothing will in future occur to disturb the pacific relations now happily established

between Portugal and France. Assure him that it is not *I* who have insulted his flag and ravaged his territories, but a captain of one of my ports; a man who, being rich and independent as a prince, seems disposed to usurp royal authority. Or rather, if my advice have any weight, ere ye return to Lisbon, proceed at once to Dieppe, whereof this bold man is commandant, and make such terms with him as ye may. Trust me, gentlemen, Ango is not a man to be trifled with!"—

On this hint, Count d'Olivares and his suite withdrew from Chambord; while Ango, premonished of their arrival and errand by a private message from the King, prepared in haste to receive them with regal magnificence, at Varengeville; and the Portuguese nobles are said to have asserted, on their return to Lisbon, that the mode of Francis's Court at Chambord was rude and insignificant, compared with that of Ango the Dieppois, in his manor; more especially when, after having entertained them right royally, he acceded to their entreaty that his fleet should be instantly recalled, conditioning only that, for the future, the captains of the King of Portugal

would evince more respect towards the flag of France.

But though the Portuguese, trembling for their possessions on the coast, and Francis, labouring under heavy obligations towards his overweening subject, saw fit to submit to his insolent aggressions, the fellow-townsmen of Ango, the companions of his youth, the witnesses of his growing prosperity, began to lose all patience with his assumptions. The Commandant of Dieppe had now taken to himself a guard of honour, by which he was surrounded whenever he went abroad, so as to be inaccessible to the burghers and captains, his kindred and friends; and established himself as governor in the castle. His beautiful dwelling on the harbour was shut up and abandoned; while, from the towers of the lofty fortress, he exercised an almost regal authority over the town. Ango's indignant fellow-burghers had scarcely patience to be treated as subjects, by one whom they had never ceased to regard in the light of a prosperous equal.

On one occasion, the town-council having presumed to resist a command issued by the Viscount

for the imposition of a new rate of harbour duty, Ango appeared in person (for the first time since his accession of rank) among the notables; and, upon their venturing to persist in their resistance, he, who had made war with impunity upon kings, proceeded so far as to inflict a blow upon Jacques Morel, one of the most active of his opponents. Ere his choler had subsided, a missive was brought to the fortress, addressed to the Governor, by the simple name of "John Ango," requiring him to visit his sister, who was lying sick and infirm in the convent of St Mary.

"What hast thou done?"—demanded the feeble voice of the nun, when Ango, obeying the summons, took his seat beside her humble pallet. "Hadst thou not enemies enough already, that thou must fain spit upon the beard of the son of our father's friend?—Jacques Morel hath vowed that thou shalt atone in dust and ashes the wrong thou hast this day dealt him in the fulness of thy pride!"—

"I have chastised the insolence of greater men than an admiral of fishing-smacks," said Ango, disdainfully.

"The fishing-smacks of Jacques Morel have

searched the depths of the Gulf of Ormus, and bandied buffets with the Atlantic waves," replied Sister Genevieve. "Such as he is to-day, such yesterday was our father. He was our playmate too, Ango, and more than our playmate; for well knowest thou, that but for thy sister's weakness, he had been at this hour thy brother."

"It was thyself who chose to break the bond of betrothment," replied her brother; "but trust me, hadst thou not retreated from the contract, never would I have bestowed my sister's hand, at the altar, on a petty trader of Dieppe!"

"Thou mightest, at least, abstain from loading him with insult," persisted Sister Genevieve; "less for *his* sake than thine own; for, thick as are these convent walls, a whisper hath already reached mine ear that Jacques Morel vows deadly vengeance against thee and thine."

"His vengeance be on my head, then," quoth Ango, with a contemptuous smile. "The good castle of Dieppe containeth dungeons for the correction of evil minds; and ere the soldiers of my garrison would permit this Dieppois chapman to smite a blow against their Governor——"

"Thy thoughts are too much bent upon deeds

of violence," remonstrated the nun. "Mischief shall hunt the violent man; and he who smiteth with the sword shall perish by the sword. But there are other blows, my good brother, which may attain even the Commandant of Dieppe. Before the tribunals of the law, all men are equal; and, lo! it is in a court of justice that thou, even thou, the Governor, shalt be called upon to render thine account!"

"The Chancellor is my good and noble friend," observed Ango, sternly; "the fiscals are my creatures; the President of the Tribunal of Commerce holds his appointment from my recommendation. I have no fear but that my case, whatever it be, will meet with gentle dealing."

"If thy cause be a strong one, thou art wise to invoke justice," said Sister Genevieve, almost re-assured by his coldness. "Nevertheless, should the Sire Morel's accusation prove a just one, *viz.*, that being, in the year of Grace 1524, thy partner in divers expeditions and undertakings, thou hast frustrated him of his lawful share of certain prizes and captures effected by vessels armed under your joint authority and at your united cost——"

"'Tis false as hell!" cried Ango, furiously.

"Heaven send that the Admiralty of Paris (before whom he is about to sue out his process) be of the same opinion!" replied his sister, unmoved by his violence.

"The Admiralty of *Paris?*" cried Ango, in a tone of consternation.

"Of Paris!—For how, at Dieppe, could Morel have obtained justice against the Commandant? The fiscals are, as thou didst now assert, thy creatures, and ——"

"How knowest thou of Jacques Morel's intention?" cried Ango, impatiently. "Despite the seeming seclusion of this holy house, have the sisters of St Mary liberty to play the gossip with members of the town-council, more especially with such as have been of old their suitors and servants?"—

"Thou hast forgotten, then, amid the pomps of thy new seigneury," observed his sister, "that our holy mother, the Superior, is sister of Jacques Morel, as I of his adversary? Even the interests of her flock have not rendered the good abbess insensible to the wrongs of her brother's house; and, lo! on learning the grievous news that he had been smitten on the cheek in full council, by

Ango the Governor, the venerable woman entreated the prayers of the community that God might incline the heart of Jacques Morel to mercy, lest he should deal ruin and disgrace on one who hath been in his time a liberal benefactor to the convent."

"My humble thanks to the pious lady mother," cried Ango, bitterly. "But bid her reserve her prayers for the plight of her brother, who may find my armed hand upon his neck sooner than he conjectures!"

"Say not so, O my brother!"—was the earnest reply of sister Genevieve. "The King, thy master, by whom thine acts, whether for good or evil, have been hitherto upheld, lieth on his death-bed. Nor Francis, nor the poor nun thy sister, shall ever again stand in the flesh before the face of God. Take it, therefore, on the word of a dying woman, that, when the breath of the King goeth forth, thy prosperity will also wax to an end. The tribunals of the kingdom will exult in dealing harshly with one who hath so long defied their authority; and, when Francis is in his grave, the upstart Viscount will find bitter enemies among the nobles of France, and the mariner, John

Ango, bitter accusers among the burghers, his sometime equals."

"Enough, enough!" cried the Governor, rising hastily from his stool. "Suffice it that thou hast already bred disquiet in my household, by inciting my only son to rebellion. But for the abetting of thine evil counsel, Theodore Ango had been even now the husband of the high and puissant Demoiselle d'Amboise, kinswoman of my Lord the Cardinal, by whose interest I were enabled to laugh to scorn the tribunals of the Admiralty. Whereas, behold, the youth is a wanderer in foreign lands; and there shall abide till I have in writing his promise to resign his idle passion for a girl of the people, the plebeian niece of Jacques Morel."

"That writing thou wilt never have!" answered the nun, with firmness. "I know my nephew's heart; and sooner than break the solemn covenant of troth-plight into which he hath entered with Isabeau Morel, Theodore will live and die an exile. Mine eyes shall behold him no more, my lips counsel him no further; but I die in the solemn persuasion that my father's grandson and representative on earth, would renounce all chance of worldly happiness rather than be forsworn."

A few more weeks, and the passing bell of the convent of St Mary announced that Sister Genevieve had entered into her rest. Yet, already her predictions had been partly accomplished. The Commandant of Dieppe was unable even to cast his love-offering upon the grave of the poor nun, having been summoned to appear before the tribunals of his native country for malpractices and felonious dealing! The town and garrison were now agitated by the most violent commotions. Ango had been removed to Paris under an armed escort, that seemed to announce the harshest intentions towards the accused; and, notwithstanding the favour which his bitter opposition to the Protestant cause in Normandy might have been expected to secure from the bigoted counsellors of the young King who had succeeded to the throne of Francis I, it was rumoured that the cause of Ango was prejudged. In spite of the eloquence of the men of the law engaged in his behalf, the accused was accordingly condemned, by a unanimity of voices, to pay, not only to Jacques Morel the amount of his demand, but a fine of ten thousand marks to the King for breach of commercial law; and, in default of payment, to

be incarcerated in the royal prison of the Petit Châtelet.

These exactions, however, heavy as they were, constituted the least painful part of Ango's punishment. Previous to the promulgation of his sentence, a successor had been appointed to his government of the castle of Dieppe; and the new Commandant, a kinsman and partisan of the family of Morel, having ejected the goods and household chattels of his predecessor, the rich hangings and sculptured cupboards of Ango had been seized upon by the populace, and converted into a bonfire; the flames of which, rising from the high cliffs beyond the citadel, were apparent as far as the manor of Varengeville, and many leagues out at sea.

Released from prison, after payment of the exorbitant charges of his process at law, Ango, broken in health and impaired in fortune by his recent calamities, would gladly have refrained from returning to the scene of his humiliation. He saw that the loss of the King, his master, was the signal of his ruin. He began to place implicit faith in the predictions of the sister now lost to him for ever; and shorn of his beams,

reduced to the insignificance of a private station, could scarcely support the idea of confronting the scornful looks of his fellow-citizens. Still, the sanguine nature of his spirit forbad him to despair. To return to his native place was inevitable; since, in speculations connected with the harbour, and in land adjoining the town, were invested the remains of a fortune shattered by ostentation, and reduced by the award of justice; nor could he refrain from flattering himself that, even yet, judicious ventures might repair the injuries he had sustained. The star which had so long prospered his undertakings could not have set for ever !—

On arriving in Normandy, however, the mortified man had not courage to re-appear in his place in the town-council of Dieppe. Secluded in his manor-house, it was thence he issued instructions to his captains and dock-masters; and, profiting by his absence, new accusations were soon brought forward against him in the Assembly of Notables. Encouraged by the success of Jacques Morel, many who had hitherto lacked courage to denounce the malefactions of the royal favourite, loudly accused him of peculation in his office, as

comptroller of the salt and grain duties of the harbour.

The accounts of the last twenty years were called for and re-examined, when peculations of so gross a nature became apparent, that it was clear the whole remaining fortune of Ango would be insufficient to replace the deficit. His houses, his lands, his noble pictures, his rich plate, became the spoil of his enemies; being forfeited to the crown by a decree of the fiscal court, and hastily and cruelly bought up by the readiest bidders.

Confined in the miserable prison adjoining the fortress of the Pollet, to which, in the plenitude of his power he had consigned so many a fellow-citizen, Ango waited in anguish of spirit to learn that the last penny of his property had been divided, and the period of his punishment expired. To die, would have been a blessed escape from the bitterness of his fate; but, fallen as he was, he felt it his duty as a man to meet the fulness of his destinies. For, lo! Bianca yet lived and looked to him for support. Sick and infirm, unable to share his captivity or even to visit him in prison, supported by the charity of a former tenant of one of his numerous farms, the Lady Bianca des-

patched daily messages to the Pollet, bidding the captive rise superior to misfortune, and reminding him that the proofs of tenderness he had once lavished on his wife, were poor in account compared with the sacrifice of living for her sake, amid the cares and privations of poverty. And thus, the fond affection, the origin of his ambition, now served as a talisman to preserve him from despair.

Amid the general wreck of his property, the manor of Varengeville had been purchased, at an inconsiderable price, by the rich burgher Jacques Morel; and his enemy now ruled in his place! Nevertheless, the chastening hand of God had so subdued the haughtiness of Ango, that he resolved, on his deliverance from prison, to take his staff in his hand and seek the humble farm in which his afflicted partner abided; albeit from its poor casement the stately bowers of Varengeville were painfully visible.

Had the sentence of Ango included only the forfeiture of his fortune, the purpose of Providence had been unfulfilled, and the proud man perished in his impenitence. But solitude had effected wonders—had bowed that stubborn heart and

broken that ambitious spirit—till, through the fractures, religion poured her healing balm, and enabled him to work out his salvation. While communing with himself in the silence of his imprisonment, Ango learned to revile his former hardness of heart, his unparental severity towards the son whose presence would have been a sustainment in his sorrow, his unbrotherly rejection of the counsels of his sainted sister. That he had not altogether neglected, in his day of prosperity, the cause of the poor and needy, was owing to the gentle instigations of Genevieve; and now, all the alleviation of his wretchedness consisted in the remembrance of his faithful service to the church, by sending messengers of peace to the savage countries with whose unenlightened children his vessels held traffic, and by endowing, to perpetuity, religious and charitable foundations for the benefit of his native town.

The happy influence of his sister, still served to soften and encourage his afflicted soul.—In his dreams, he oftentimes beheld her, crowned with the palms of beatitude, and surrounded with the spirits of just men made perfect, bidding him submit himself humbly to the rod of affliction,

and trust in the mercy of his chastiser. "Thou hast a loving and duteous son who will still yield comfort to thine old age," seemed evermore to issue from the lips of the spirit in bliss; and Ango, who for months past had not dared to turn his thoughts towards the banished Theodore, upon whom, at parting, he had pronounced a fearful malediction, began to call to mind the sweetness of filial love, and to believe that Heaven, in its mercy, might yet restore the lost one to his arms!

"From those for whose advancement I laboured, I met with nought but ingratitude!" faltered Ango, on waking, to find his pallet of rushes wet with tears; "but, lo! my heart whispers that the youth with whom I have dealt so harshly, will render me a blessing for every curse!"

It was at noonday that the period of Ango's imprisonment expired; but so great was the interest excited in his favour by the patience with which he had supported his humiliation, that he found no difficulty in obtaining leave to shelter himself, till nightfall, within the prison walls, so as to escape the insults of the populace. He had signified to his wife, to have a horse and guide

in attendance before the church of St Marie des Grêves at sunset; and from thence, after performing his devotions at the shrine of Notre Dame de bon Secours, which, in happier times, he had erected in gratitude for the deliverance of one of his argosies from shipwreck, he took his silent way, in company with the peasant despatched by the Lady Bianca, to bring him to her presence.

It was a chilly autumn evening. Shrill gusts arose at intervals from the sea, and drove athwart the heights crowned by the lonely chapel of Caudecôte. The fields were at rest, save when a solitary bittern rose from the marshy meadows of the valley of Arques. The boor by whom the unhappy man was conducted, plodded onwards in sullen taciturnity; and Ango, dispirited by the anticipation of beholding upon the countenance of his beloved wife, the ravages effected by misery and privation, could scarcely support the sadness of his soul. So often as he had traversed that road in all the elation of triumph!—So often as he had escorted from the Castle of Dieppe to Varengeville the litter containing his lovely lady, preceded by a guard of honour, and accompanied by the promising youth, his son!—And now a

sullen peasant was all his escort; his hapless wife was pining even unto death, the pensioner of the poor; while as to Theodore, even his parents knew not whether he still survived, or to what savage shore and cruel straits he might have been driven by the persecutions of his father.

The night drew on to utter darkness; and Ango's eyes, blinded with tears, marked not what road they were taking. His soul was back in the mystery of years,—his heart was heavy with self-reviling; and it startled him from a reverie as of deep sleep, when the guide, suddenly checking his horse, bad him alight, for that his journey was accomplished.

"How is this?"—cried Ango, on discerning that, instead of the rude gates of a farm house, the man held open the postern of a long stone wall. Suspecting an ambush, he began to repent having ventured forth unarmed with a stranger; when, lo! the lights from within the edifice that confronted him, on closing the postern, seemed to revive half obliterated recollections; and a death-like sickness came over him when he found that he was standing on the well-known lawn of Varengeville. He

had been betrayed, then, into the presence of his enemy !—

Already faint with exhaustion, and the excitement of the preceding hours, Ango fell lifeless to the ground. On his restoration to consciousness, centuries seemed to have passed over his head. He was no longer the same Ango, the same humiliated outcast. He was at Varengeville. He was reclining on a bed in his own favourite chamber; and beside him, with her hand fast locked in his, stood Bianca, his own beloved Bianca, pale indeed (and with her paleness rendered still more dazzling by the mourning weeds in which she was attired), but gentle and affectionate; *more* affectionate, *far* more gentle than in their days of prosperity.

In a moment, her thin wasted hand was pressed to his lips, while his finger, pointing to the sable dress she wore, seemed to indicate the question he had not strength to utter—"Hath the worst befallen us?—Are we childless?"—

Bianca was spared the necessity of reply.—Ango perceived that they were not alone; and the deep sobs of the person who was kneeling at the

extremity of the couch, indicated that it was one who took part in all their joys and sorrows!—

"Where am I, and who is this compassionate stranger?" faltered Ango, drawing his wife gently towards him.

"You are in your own house, and in presence of your exemplary son," replied Bianca, placing her hand upon the head of the youth, whom, with a burst of relieving tears, Ango strained in ecstasy to his bosom.

"Varengeville is yours again, my beloved father," exclaimed Theodore, when the first burst of emotion between them had subsided. "The tidings of your disasters reached me not till a year after the transmission of the sad intelligence by the father of my affianced wife. Deeply grieved that the accusation brought against you in a moment of exasperation should have proved the origin of such extensive and unforeseen misfortunes, our friend armed and despatched a vessel to Goa, whence I had already sent tidings to his daughter of my safety and faithful affection; and six months ago, I sailed from India on my return, to tender my parents the first fruits of my industry and enterprise. To me, hath our repentant enemy

surrendered this house and its dependencies; and henceforth, as heretofore, you are master at Varengeville. I shall but crave harbourage under your roof for myself and one gentle being, from whom I beseech you, my father, no longer to withhold the benediction, without which our union were accursed in the eye of Heaven!"

To resist the entreaty of the son thus happily restored to him, was impossible. It was not without a struggle that Ango consented to clasp hands in amity with the man who, provoked by repeated insults and aggressions, had undesignedly wrought the double work of vengeance; nevertheless, when he saw with what sincerity of sympathy Morel lent his aid to redeem the wreck of his fortunes, and conciliate in his behalf the good-will of his fellow-citizens, he opened his arms to his repentant friend, and consented to efface the recollection of all former feuds, by the union of their offspring.

Relieved from its cumbrous load of ostentation, the manor of Varengeville, as the abode of a family affecting only the condition of thriving burghers and faithful subjects of the King, became a far happier spot than at the epoch of

its more ambitious destinies. Ango rejoiced to resign to his son the care of his commercial enterprises; limiting his own efforts to the arrangements and cultivation of the delicious gardens of the manor, and to the task of retiring, hand in hand, with his altered and subdued partner, into the vale of years.

A new generation had arisen round his knees ere he was summoned to his great account; a generation bearing the united names of Ango and Morel, to whom their grandsire's last admonition was couched in nearly the words of the dying Wolsey—

> I charge ye, fling away ambition;
> By that sin fell the angels. How, then, shall man,
> The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?

The manor-house, now converted into a farm, still retains striking traces of the remarkable man by whom it was called into existence. Carved medallions of stone, containing heraldic devices, heads of negroes and Indians (the people of the countries with whom the rich burgher of Dieppe held traffic), still adorn the external walls; as well as portraits of Francis I, and Diana of Poitiers. Some vestiges also remain of the far-

famed frescos which adorned the chimney-pieces; and an open gallery of carved stone, adorned with Saxon arches and columns, that might afford a model to modern architects. But the full-length portraits of Ango and his wife, which, till within a few years, were to be seen enchased in the wall above a stone mantel-piece of rich design, have wholly disappeared; as well as the marble slab, which, after its inhumation in 1550, in the Church of St Jacques, in the chapel bearing his name, was placed, by the pious care of his son, over the remains of John Ango.

A far more permanent testimony to the career of Ango, is borne in the decline of the town of Dieppe, accounted, before his time, one of the most flourishing in France. From the moment of his elevation, not a petty capitalist of the place but aspired to the honours of nobility. The high-sounding title of "Viscount" Ango, diverted all their thoughts from their herring and cod fisheries, and oriental commerce. The passion for ennoblement became universal; and being judiciously played upon by the King's ministers, ever ready to bestow tinsel in exchange for gold, scarcely an independent merchant of the burgh

but was enabled to sport his hour in the glittering courts of royalty. The sole object of the industry and enrichment of the Dieppois, appeared the acquirement of empty honours; and the burghers thus ennobled, soon followed up their madness by consecrating their sons to the army and the church, with a view to the acquirement of further honorary distinctions. Commerce was gradually neglected, and civic duties were disregarded.

By degrees, the dockyards of Dieppe fell into decay. The port no longer sent forth adventurous fleets to the great Indies, or hazarded establishments in the Western hemisphere. Its efficient men were fighting in the civil wars, or making *congées* at the Louvre, St Germains, or Versailles. The whole navy of a town which had once exulted in the princely privateers of Ango, capable of striking terror into kings, became finally reduced to a few fishing-boats, and as many ill-built brigs, trading with Norway for her deals, and Gascony for her wines.—Even the magnificent churches of St Jacques and St Remy, lacking the wealthy patrons who had loaded them with benefactions, fell into decay;

but *this* defacement is not wholly attributable to the neglect of the notables of the city.

When, in the zenith of Ango's pride and prosperity, the unfortunate Mary Stuart, about to embark from Dieppe for Scotland, condescended to become his guest, the host of the young Queen took delight in pointing out to her royal notice, that not a man among the two thousand wearing his colours, who were ranged along the harbour to do her honour, was infected by the doctrines of the new schism of Protestantism.

"Have a care, Master Ango!" — was the reply of the royal daughter of the house of Guise; "you have unsafe neighbours here; and spiritual infection, God wot, is easily extended."

The words of Mary of Scotland were more speedily verified than might have been expected. Within a year, the worship of the Huguenots was established in the town of Dieppe; and within two, John Knox, the Reformer, was preaching the new doctrines, unmolested, in the Cathedral of St Remy! Some years later, one of the severest actions of the Leaguers was fought in the adjoining valley of Arques, in whose castle Henry IV had taken up his position.

True to the faith of his ancestors, and schooled by the wise lessons of Sister Genevieve and the afflicting example of his parents, Ango the younger held with moderation the even tenor of his way. By the intermarriage of his only daughter with the grand nephew of Jacques Morel, the manor of Varengeville was preserved for nearly a century in the family; which, in the reign of Louis XIV, became extinct.

From that period, the lands were divided; and the house, degraded by neglect, was converted into a farm. Yet even now, when visited by travellers attracted by the beauty of its site, and the interest of remains so valuable, as being authentically characteristic of the domestic architecture of the sixteenth century, the manor of Varengeville is pointed out by the peasants of the environs, as "THE HOUSE OF ANGO!"

THE QUEEN'S COMFIT-MAKER,

A LEGEND OF TOTTENHAM CROSS.

"A RIGHT noble bequest!—a most Christian devisement!" exclaimed Master Ebenezer Trackit, the notary of Tottenham Cross, folding his hands over his sober doublet, and fixing his eyes contemplatively upon the huge pewter standish, well garnished with goose-quills, which had been placed before him for the purpose of drawing out heads of the testamentary dispositions of Balthazar Sanchez, a wealthy retired citizen, whom his enemies called "the Spanish Jew," and the haughty esquires whose lands bordered upon his own, stigmatised with equal contempt as "Sanchez, the comfit-maker."—"All and several those excellent lands and messuages, situated be-

twixt the northern bank of the Mosel and the farms of Leecroft and Bishopstone," resumed the notary; "the same being estimated at the annual fee and rent of four hundred marks or upwards, lawful moneys of the realm, to be had in perpetual trust by such person or persons as the testator may see fit to appoint, for the erection, entertainment, and maintenance, of a tenement or tenements, for the comfort and refuge of eight individuals of the aged poor of the good parish of Tottenham. Such, as I conceive, Master Balthazar, was the purport of your dictation?"

"Even so. For the endowment of alms-houses to contain eight poor people of this parish," replied his employer, from the comfortable easy-chair in which he sat ensconced; and, as he spoke, the old man turned towards the saturnine notary a swarthy but hearty countenance, clearly indicating that the indisposition which had determined him to settle the disposal of his worldly gear, was of accidental occurrence. Balthazar's seventy-fifth year found him healthy, wealthy, and wise; easy in mind and body; and, though certain of his neighbours, envious of the old gentleman's worldly prosperity, presumed to infer

that the healthfulness of his body arose, in a great measure, from there being little or no mind to operate upon its condition, it would appear to be better fortune than is usually decreed to the lot of fools, for the favourite servitor of an intolerant Papist king to have laid up, like Balthazar Sanchez, store of riches and honours during the ascendancy of her most Protestant Majesty, Queen Elizabeth.

Among these, was his present associate and counsellor, Ebenezer Trackit. Nevertheless, albeit the notary had heretofore inferred and argued respectfully of his client's mental capacities, the charge now entrusted to him to execute, somewhat staggered his confidence.

"An estate of four hundred marks per annum!" was Master Trackit's mental commentary on the text. "A third portion or more of his possessions to be flung away in bootless alms upon the ungrateful poor of a foreign nation, without so much as the common return of praise and thanksgiving; since it his will that the benefaction remain a nameless dole; and since, even were the comfit-maker's name blazoned in Roman capitals on the frontal of his alms-houses, my mind misgives me

that scarcely a knee within would bend in supplication for the soul of one whom the ragamuffins of Tottenham parish designate in their cups no otherwise than 'the Spanish Jew.'"

"Are the words set down?" quoth Master Balthazar, his patience at length outwearied by the length of the notary's cogitations, from which he rightly augured opposition to the purport of his bequest.

"Methought it were safer to allow space for your worship's reflection upon the terms of so munificent an act!" replied the notary, twirling his thumbs.

"Tut, tut!" cried the old Spaniard, impatiently. "Am I, then, so sorry an ass, friend Trackit, as to entitle you in the supposition that I am disposing, on *impulse* solely (the impulse of a hale man suffering from his first twinge of bodily pain), of a third part of my estate? I tell ye no,—and again and again, *No*, Master Notary. For many a year of my past life, such hath been my settled resolve; and I say unto you once more,—take,—write,—that my last will be accomplished."

"Even as you desire, worshipful sir," replied

the notary, slowly advancing his hand towards the pewter standish; "yet am I in duty bound to warn and admonish you——"

"The deuce you are!" interrupted the Spaniard. "I should have surmised that the warnings and admonishments wherewith I was favoured yestermorn by his pious Reverence, Longwind the rector, might suffice for a season."

"The warnings of his Reverence were, in all probability, of a spiritual kind, and regarded your soul's salvation. Mine, Master Balthazar, concern your temporal interests, and are, consequently, more germane to our present purpose," snuffled the lawyer.

"The time is, I take it, come or coming with me, when spiritual and temporal must be so blended in my account that no time ought to be lost in disposing of either," cried the old Spaniard. "Nay, good friend, a truce with superfluous civilities. I ask no compliments either on my looks or condition. I know that I am not an ailing man—that I carry my threescore years and fifteen nimbly enough; but I also know that I have lived my appointed time; that the loan of

life apportioned me by my beneficent Creator hath reached its term; that the great liability is due; and the grim bailiff, Death, justified in forcing an entrance into my dwelling. Let the aged subject of our aged sovereign, therefore, hasten to set his house in order; and for the third and last time he bids you, Master Notary, take, write, and record his last will."

"Your farm on the northward bank of the Mosel, betwixt Leecroft and Bishopstone?" demanded Master Trackit, dwelling emphatically on every syllable of the inquiry, and leisurely resuming his pen. And this time, as if to avoid further parley or preliminary, the venerable testator contented himself with an affirmative nod of the head.

"It is written!" snuffled Ebenezer, after a minute or two, perceiving that his patron, well, or sick, or sorry, was in no humour to be further crossed. "It is written, and shall be fairly engrossed with the rest for your future signature. Meanwhile, assure yourself that so prodigal a donation to people nowise akin to you in blood, nature, language, nor nation, will be resented,

and probably disputed by process of law, by those whose affinity entitles them, in right, to your inheritance."

"Nowise akin to me in blood?"—cried the comfit-maker, turning fiercely upon his confidential adviser. "Is not every son of Adam akin to *all* the sons of Adam?—Is it not written by the great Founder of our faith (who, were every other evidence of divine nature laid aside, had by that alone deserved to be called the Son of God)—is it not written, I say, in the word of Christ, that all men are brethren? and what right have my far-off nephews or nieces to dispute with me touching the claims of our common kindred?—Nowise akin to me in blood, nation, or language, quotha?—Under what governance, I pray you, have I lived for the last half century?—What language hath breathed in mine ears the words of kindness?—What sovereign hath been my liege?—What laws have been my protection?—Why even those of this fair island of Britain, whose air I have respired in peace, and whose earth will shortly shelter the dust that hath so long burthened her soil! My home hath been among you—my happiness among you. The gold and

silver I have amassed were earned out of the havings of Englishmen. Who, therefore, shall dispute the justice which would award to these, my benefactors, a fraction of the all I owe them?"

"Nevertheless," replied the notary, unmoved by the old man's generous enthusiasm, "the law looks with a jealous eye upon the testamentary caprices of old age. The pretext of heirship is apt to be favoured by the grave personages to whom is intrusted the distribution of property."

"Away with you! To no person or personage, howsoever grave, howsoever influential, is intrusted the distribution of property, over which the lawful possessor hath exercised the right of either gift or bequest!" exclaimed Balthazar. "My estate came not by inheritance. My estate is no lifehold possession, to be derived by my posterity from my ancestry through my transitory enjoyment. This good house over my head,—yonder field basking in the sunshine,—are mine by no kingly or queenly grant, to some far-off progenitors, in requital of his partisanship, or in guerdon for his servility. I worked for them—I drudged for them—I spared for them. I bought them, little by little, field by field, with the earn-

ings for which I sacrificed my morning rest—my midnight slumber. And are not these mine to dispose of?—Think you I would have submitted to labour while others were sleeping, or to fast when others were feasting, save in the certitude that the fruit of my toils was to lie at my own absolute disposal?"

"Perhaps not—probably not; but the grave, Master Balthazar, is a gulf that swalloweth up a man's thoughts and resolves. The coffin-lid closeth over him, and his place knoweth him no longer. The jurisprudence of the country provideth a mind for those who are no longer capable of reflection; and so soon as you are debarred by the great decree of Nature from advocating your own cause, my word upon it, the Queen's learned bench will determine—"

"*What* will it determine?—That a man may not do what he likes with his own?"—screamed Balthazar, harassed beyond his patience.

"That a man may not do what he likes with his own when he hath outlived the faculties that ought to govern his likings and mislikings," replied the notary, calmly taking the pen from his ear, and replacing it in the standish.

"God's death! Would you assert me to be in my dotage?—would you declare me *non compos mentis?*"—vociferated the old Spaniard, while his brow contracted, and his lips grew livid with rage.

"Would *I* assert?—would *I* declare?—Heaven's mercy and justice forbid!"—replied Master Ebenezer, in a tone of deprecation. "But what are *my* poor assertions to the purpose—more especially while your worshipful self is here in the flesh, to prove your own lucidity of intellect? No, Master Balthazar!—It is when the bell hath tolled, and the stone been rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre, that those who come after you will, perforce of bribery or persuasion, probably induce such evidence of singularity of manners and customs, as would assuredly determine any court of justice in the kingdom to set aside the will which you are now troubling yourself to dictate to my humble transcription."

"Set aside, on plea of aberration of intellect, a will expressly setting forth, in the preamble, that *I*, Balthazar Sanchez, native of the kingdom of Castile, some time comfit-maker to his most Catholic Majesty, Don Philip II, and now resident in the parish of Tottenham Cross, by

London, being in a sound state of body and mind, do give and bequeath—I say, Master Notary, being in a sound state of body and mind—*in a sound state of body and mind;*—is it not so set down?"

"It is," replied Ebenezer, somewhat overawed by his vehemence. "Nevertheless, it were no difficult matter to prove, good sir," he continued, taking advantage of the old Spaniard's loss of breath, "that, on the 6th day of June, in the year of Grace 1601, wherein you are pleased thus to record the soundness of your body and mind, the said body had been, for the first time in your mortal life, visited by indications of no less fatal a distemper than paralysis of the lower limbs!"

"'Tis false!" cried Balthazar, starting up; and, in spite of the long brocaded wrapping-gown in which he was enveloped, standing for a moment erect, with no other support than the pressure of his shrivelled hand upon the table—"'Tis utterly false!"

"Then, old Dosem of the Market Place lies in his teeth," muttered the notary, between his own. "At least," he resumed aloud, "you will

admit that you have recently received leechcraft at his hands?"

"I sent for the meddling numskull to administer a cataplasm to the shoulder of Zora yonder," cried Sanchez, pointing to a fine Spanish pointer that lay on a rug beside his escritoire,—"the poor beast having been hurt by the awkwardness of my nephew-in-law, Sir Carnaby, who stumbled over her with the cup of scalding diet-drink he was officiously hastening to offer me. But I see how 'tis!—The whole batch of you are in league against me!—The ass, my nephew-in-law, will suborn the paltry compounder of boluses to swear that, at the period of inditing my will, I was infirm of body; and my some-time agent and scrivener, Master Ebenezer Trackit, to prove that I was infirm of mind!—My household servants will testify that these two sapient witnesses were admitted to my privacy; and the law of the kingdom will forthwith issue a posthumous statute of lunacy against a man whose head is as clear as its own, and whose conscience clearer! And thus, my will is to be defeated; the poor mulcted of their rights; and the jackanapes, Sir Carnaby Savile (who married with a comfit-

maker's grand-niece in hopes of appropriating his houses and lands as heir-at-law) will be enabled to sport twenty new doublets per month instead of ten; while my lady, his wife, flaunts it at Court as brave as the best gentlewoman born!—I'faith, 'tis enough to *drive* a man mad or into his grave, to think on't!"—

"Compose yourself, good Master Sanchez—compose yourself,"—ejaculated the cunning notary. "All that you apprehend may be obviated, provided we take care of the wording of your bequest; and, above all, in the selection of the gentlemen of trust to whom you propose to bequeath the execution of your will. Let them be such as Sir Carnaby Savile, in cunning or authority, may not overmatch. For the latter, if I may presume to suggest, let the Chancellor for the time being, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, whoever may fill that honourable and sacred function, be two of the four trustees of the purposed charity. For the remaining two, I would fain suggest, under submission to your better judgment, the Rector of Tottenham, as being especially interested in bettering the condition of its parish poor; and my humble self,

of all men living, best able to prove before her Majesty's courts of justice, the sanity of the worshipful testator and the motives of the bequest."

"Good faith, then, slight evidence may suffice!" cried old Sanchez, with a sneer. "For what know ye of my motives?—and how, pray, are you to prove to the Consistory Court that I am not a crack-brained humorist, intent upon defrauding my rightful heirs for the sake of a whimsey?"—

Master Ebenezer Trackit shrugged his shoulders. His client was hard to please. He would neither submit to be suspected of imbecility, nor asserted of sound intellect.

"Nevertheless," resumed the fractious gentleman, ashamed, perhaps, of his own petulance—"I must, perforce, content myself with such instruments as Providence affords me. It may further the accomplishment of my purpose that a pettifogging lawyer is interested in the scheme. For the sake of public influence, therefore, Master Trackit, inscribe, as trustees of the charity, the names of the two officials highest in authority in Church and State; and, for the sake of profes-

sional zeal, the vicar, and the attorney. Put your own finger in the pie, since I perceive that the pie will else be marred in the baking!"—

Master Trackit hastened to vindicate himself. His honoured patron wholly misjudged him. He had no wish to be included in the trusteeship—no desire to assist in making or marring the act so ignobly stigmatized by its benevolent deviser.

"Be it as I have said!"—cried Balthazar, weary of the altercation. "And now, be off with you to your desk. By this hour to-morrow, let the parchment be fairly engrossed; and when we have read it over together, ere my signature and signet be affixed in presence of such fitting witnesses as I shall summon for the purpose, you, in your turn, Master Notary, must listen to the recital of the early history of my life."

Ebenezer started in delighted astonishment.

"Seeing that, as you may have to testify of me and my secret springs of action, it is at least fitting you should know the man of whom you may have to speak; and of whom, whether Jew or Gentile, sinner or saint, at present you know no more than that he was a native of Old Castile, and sometime comfit-maker to his most Catholic

Majesty Don Philip, King of Spain, of blessed memory, as in my will set down."

"And a dutiful and faithful subject of Elizabeth, Queen of England, whom God preserve!" added the notary, with professional precision.

"That, as it may be!" muttered Balthazar Sanchez; while Ebenezer gathered up his papers, rose deliberately from his high-backed chair, and looked round in search of his trencher-cap. "Meanwhile, be diligent. To-morrow, sir, at three of the afternoon;—to-day, God speed you!"

As the notary emerged from the gateway of Master Balthazar's mansion (whereon, from privilege of place, as honorary comfit-maker to the Court, the arms of England were emblazoned within a garter, having a lion and a griffin for supporters, and the initials "E. R." annexed, in honour of her gracious Majesty the Queen, as may be seen even at this present writing),* nothing could exceed his exultation at the prospect of penetrating into the mysterious fortunes of an individual, concerning whom so much had been said and surmised in the neighbourhood,

* The house occupied by Balthazar Sanchez, at Tottenham, is now the George and Vulture Inn.

as Master Balthazar Sanchez. The prospect of becoming trustee of his munificent donation, including right of attorneyship, and chance of litigation of the same, was nothing in comparison with such an insight into his private history as would enable him from that day forth and for evermore, to taunt and tantalize on this subject the inquisitive soul of his gabbling helpmate, Mistress Dorothy Trackit.

On this score, however, the notary reckoned without his host; for on resuming his seat in the dingy parlour of his client the following day, the first word uttered by Balthazar, was a condition of secrecy, solemn enough to appal even the soul of a notary. So manifest, indeed, was the awe of poor Ebenezer, that Master Sanchez instantly invited him to reinforce his courage by a deep draught of Malaga wine, of which two kinds, the sweet and the dry, stood in antique flagons on the board; and, beside them, certain parcel-gilt saucers of rare confectionary, compounded, probably, under the personal inspection of the venerable host, by whom, as history informs us, the noble art of comfit-making was first introduced into the realms of Britain.

"Taste, I pray you, of yonder candied pistachio nuts," said the old Spaniard, with a smile more benevolent than he had hitherto vouchsafed to the man of the law. "Their flavour (which hath been commended of more kings, princes, and royal personages, than there are kernels in the dish) may serve to take off the ill-taste of the words I have compelled you to utter.

"On this especial confection, moreover, Master Ebenezer, is founded the fabric of my fortunes! By this rare invention, did your humble servant attract the notice and secure the favour of that memorable prince, on whose dominions the sun did never set, but on whose mind abided impenetrable darkness. God pity him!—he is gone to his dread account; and, sinful soul as I am, rather, in the day of judgment, would I be poor Balthazar, the stewer of pruins, than Don Philip of Old Spain and New, the roaster of his fellow-men!"

The notary cast an anxious glance round the chamber. In those times, sovereigns were not to be thus lightly judged. Though Elizabeth of England was far gone in moral and physical decay, the law slept not,—the scaffold was still active;—

nor did the hangman, like the old comfit-maker, hold an honorary function at court.

"Fear not!" quoth Balthazar, replying to his look of mute consternation. "These walls are of notable thickness, as the bills of cost of my masons and bricklayers can attest; seeing that, in my orders for their construction, I purposed them to outlive the existence of many a more lordly roof-tree, in order to testify of the poor comfit-maker to ages yet unborn. Be of good cheer, friend Ebenezer! No eavesdroppers are at hand. With a view to the free discussion of the matters between us, I have dispatched, hither and thither, the varlets, my serving-men; and there be none left besides ourselves within the lintel of my door, saving deaf Margery the cook-maid, who is absorbed in her afternoon diversion, mumbling the penitential psalms in her chimney-corner, while she basteth the roast for supper. We are as safe, man, as mice in a malt-tub!—"

Thus re-assured, Master Ebenezer filled his mouth once more with the pistachio comfits pushed towards him, in their saucer of golden filigree, by his kindly host; and, reclining against a high-backed ebony chair, which, to a modern lounger

would be an instrument of torture, assumed an attentive attitude, while Master Balthazar Sanchez cleared his throat, and delivered himself as follows:—

"Allow me to preface the history of my birth by that of my earliest consciousness. The first thing I remember is tender entreatment in a small farm-house, pleasantly situated some four leagues from Madrid, between a straggling wood and a shallow river, which afforded endless varieties of sport and pastime. The old farmer and his wife who fed and clothed me, spoke of me, among our scanty neighbours, as the orphan of a deceased kinsman; but so indulgent were they in their care, that, even in those years when the heart of childhood hungers and thirsts after parental tenderness, I never seemed to miss the fondness of father or mother. Not that I was indiscreetly pampered;—the habits of the place were humble and frugal. But I was a healthy happy child, left to the free use of my limbs, to the full enjoyment of earth, air, and water. The river, with its bulrushes for spears, its spotted trout for sport,—the wood with its wild fruits, wild flowers, wild squirrels, wilder song-birds,—

were mine to have, if not to hold. I was allowed to wander at will; to see the sun go down and rise again unchanged on the morrow; the moon vanish and re-appear with an altered face; the stars revolve and re-revolve, the same, yet ever varying. There was no one to molest me with restrictions, nor plague me with learning; no doating mother to shriek when I approached the margin of the stream, or fall into a swoon if I climbed the lofty cork-trees in search of a finch's nest: there was not a soul, in short, to interpose betwixt me and our universal Mother, Almighty Nature. Failing the ordinary ties of tenderness, I looked accordingly into her eyes for smiles,—I hung upon her lips for love,—I clung to her bosom for nourishment and joy!—I was alone with her,—alone in a desert,—alone at that holy age when there is bliss unmingled with awe in utter solitude!

"It did not then occur to me to inquire why I was never called upon to assist the labours of Pepito and Dolores;—why all around me were toiling, and I, at rest. I perceived only that these indulgent people had authority over me, which, when it suited them, they exercised; for once,

when gazing at a far-off line of mountains bordering the horizon, I expressed a wish to explore their summits, and announced my intention of being off some summer-day on an excursion into the Sierra, the old people denied me so resolutely, that I found my purpose was only to be accomplished by truancy.

"'Is not the air good, and are not the woods hereabouts green enow for thy liking, child?' demanded old Pepito, taking the pipe from his mouth. 'Beware, Balthazar, beware!—A league's space from our humble gates, and there is no safety for thee on earth!—Abide with us in peace and safety; or depart, and die the death of a dog.'

"There was something so emphatic in the old man's words and looks, that, though his threat was mere unsupported assertion, it sunk deep into my heart. I prepared myself for obedience with all the simplicity of a child. But the following day, Dolores, as if compassionating my restlessness, bad me array myself in my best and accompany her to church, whither she had never yet suffered me to bear her company. The farm was a solitary place, remote from village or hamlet; and the chapel, to which the good woman

was accustomed to repair for the performance of her devotions, was attached to the convent of Sancta Benedicta, situated about half-a-league higher up the Manzanares. In the course of my solitary excursion I had often looked with awe upon its moated parapet. There was something in the lofty walls, rising almost to the level of the domed turret-tops, and, above all, in the huge black iron cross surmounting the entrance, which spoke wonders to my imagination. Wandering near it at eventide, I had listened with deep emotion to the tolling of the Angelus, and at times even caught the solemn diapason of the choir, chanting their evening hymn to the Virgin. The nuns (named with deep reverence by the neighbouring peasantry as healers of their ills and comforters of their tribulations) presented to my mind a species of lesser divinities, the invisible origin of mighty and manifold good. Often had I longed to look on the unimaginable faces of those whose lips emitted sounds of such ethereal sweetness, and whose lives were gentle as their voices; and when, following the footsteps of Dolores, I entered the narrow wicket, crossed the silent court, and slipped into the vast chapel,

where only a few country people were kneeling on the marble pavement (the nuns being concealed from sight behind the sweeping green curtains of the choir), so overpowering to my senses was the influence of the rolling music of the organ, the fragrant clouds of frankincense, the gorgeous ceiling of the gilded domes, and the deserted solitude of the aisles, that, by an impulsive movement, I dropped on my knees upon the marble floor beside my conductress, raising my hands, and calling in spirit on the name of God, as I had often done amid the green solitudes of the forest, or under the overarching canopy of heaven.

"It was no small disappointment, nevertheless, that a glimpse of my terrestrial angels was denied me; and when, at length, a mumbling, greasy-faced old gentleman, ascended the pulpit, and, with a superabundance of groans and gestures, began to preach the religion of persecution, of flames, faggots, and eternal damnation, the spell of my piety was dissolved; and right glad was I when the cessation of his discourse entitled my companion to make her exit from the chapel. To my surprise, instead of re-crossing the court-

yard towards the wicket, Dolores made towards a side door, and entered a damp vestibule. She had business, it appeared, with the Superior. An aged nun offered to conduct her to the Mother Abbess's sanctuary, bidding me abide quietly behind; and so little did this first interview with one of my cloistered angels tend to stimulate my curiosity, that it afforded me small pleasure when, after ten minutes' absence, the conductress of Dolores returned, and bade me follow her to the presence of the Superior.

"'Put off thy cap and shoes, child!—' was the admonition of the old lay sister, as we reached the door; and, thus abjectly prepared, I entered a suite of chambers, which, to eyes familiar with the bare walls and rude rafters of Pepito's farm, appeared secondary only to the temple from which I had recently emerged. A succession of lofty doors of polished wood, incased in white or black marble, heavily but richly carved, gave us access through several chambers hung with tapestry, whereon, to my inexperienced eyes, the figures seemed endowed with life and motion; till we reached a small oratory, the stained windows of which diffused a supernatural hue over a tall cross

of ebony, supporting the tortured body of the Redeemer, sculptured in the purest ivory. I forgot to tender my obeisance to the presiding mistress of the place, so thoroughly was my attention absorbed by the saintly sweetness of that dying countenance, and the exquisite beauty of the work!—

"'On thy knees, boy, to the reverend Superior,' ejaculated Dolores. But the boy heard her not. His eyes were riveted upon the crucifix.

"'Your Reverence sees!—' exclaimed Dolores, 'If such be the first impression, what may not be anticipated from a continuous residence in the community! Snatch, madam, O snatch this brand from the fire!—This boy's sole chance of safety on earth, of salvation hereafter, lies in finding shelter under the roof of the daughters of heaven! Another week, and the restlessness of his humour will bring him within reach of his enemies.'

"Instead of replying, the Abbess kept deliberately surveying me; while I, in return, gazed with wondering admiration upon the lofty figure and commanding countenance, set off by the rich robing of her high vocation.

"'Be it so,' said she, at length. 'I adopt thee,

little outcast, into our house. Let him be taken to the confectionary, where sisters Clara and Ofilia will forthwith instruct him in the mysteries which have rendered our convent famous among the banquetries of St Ildefonso.'

"'Kneel, child—kneel, and crave the blessing of thy benefactress!' cried Dolores, apparently overcome with joy at the prospects unfolding for her protegé; and, though sorely puzzled to conceive what peculiar advantage I was to derive from the protection conceded, or what might be the nature of the mysteries into which I was to be inaugurated,—so awe-inspiring was the aspect of the towering Lady Abbess, arrayed in her stole and cross of office,—that down I went at her feet, while, with her shrivelled hand imposed upon my head, she pronounced her benediction.

"On striking lightly on a bell of golden fret-work appended to the desk of the oratory, the lay sister again appeared to conduct us forth; and after threading an infinity of gloomy passages, we suddenly found ourselves in an airy vaulted chamber, the floor of which was of the tessellated marble of the country, with scattered tables of the same costly material, whereat sat

divers sisters of the order, enrobed with scrupulous neatness;—one shredding rose-leaves into a wicker basket, another carefully separating the petals of a heap of orange blossoms, a third pouring clarified honey through a sieve of snow-white lawn; while several others stood beside little stoves or furnaces, slowly stirring certain delicate confections, the aroma of which imparted a most appetizing flavour to the atmosphere. Such was the confectionary of the convent of Sancta Benedicta; and, young and ignorant as I was, the processes in progress around me, and the death-like silence in which they were performed, were almost as startling as the crucibles and alembics of an alchymist!—

"The object of my presence there was soon explained; and, though the glances cast upon me by sisters Ofilia and Clara, to whose hands I had been commended by the Abbess, were far from conciliating, I was too much overpowered by the novelty of the scene to offer much opposition, when my foster-mother took leave of me on her departure, promising to furnish me on the morrow with my scanty wardrobe, and exhorting me to be docile and submissive.

"'But I shall return to the farm—I shall soon return to the farm?'—I demanded, clinging to her hand.

"Dolores shook her head.

"'Nay, but I must and will return!'—cried I.—'My garden—my faithful dog—my poor thrush—my——

"'They shall be cared for, Balthazar,' replied my foster-mother, with a sadder countenance than I had ever seen her wear; 'but I know thee too well, boy, and love thee too well, to renew for thee an enjoyment of a lawless liberty, such as would surely lead to thy destruction.'

"In vain were my remonstrances. The more I entreated, the more Dolores hastened her departure, lest my reluctance should dispose the good nuns harshly towards me; and no sooner was she gone, than the lay sisters gave me over in charge to the old gardener of the convent, whose hovel was to be my sleeping-apartment. Tonsured, bathed, and clad in the linen ephod of a novice, I was re-admitted on the morrow to the presence of my instructresses, and entrusted with the grating of some ripe citron peels, the delicate

fragrance of which almost reconciled me to the task.

"Fear not!—I am not about to inaugurate you, good Master Ebenezer, into the arts and mysteries of my calling. Suffice it that, as in all other apprenticeships, that which at first diverted me as a sport, as a task grew tedious. I soon loathed the close confinement imposed upon me —the heated and sickly atmosphere of the confectionary—the penances imposed on me for trifling blunders — the cuffs bestowed when some vessel or implement of silver was presented tarnished to the discriminating eye of Sister Ofilia. My young limbs burned to refresh themselves in the limpid brook,—my young heart to expand, according to its wont, amid summer leaves and joyous birds. My sole recreation consisted in an occasional hour's labour with old Pedro in the convent garden; the high walls of which caused even the poor plants and flowers to spindle up towards the blessed light of the sky, even as my own soul was aspiring towards a happier sphere.

"Idle were my repinings! Easy as had been

my ingress to the convent, egress was impossible. A rash attempt at escape was punished, not only with the discipline, but with a month's confinement in a solitary cell; and so happy were the results of my seclusion, that, on the cessation of my punishment, I began to find even the air of the confectionary balmy, and the gossip of the old nuns cheering. From that period, all intercourse with poor Dolores (who had been accustomed to visit the convent on Sabbaths and feast-days) was denied me; wisely, perhaps,—for the less I recurred to the farm and its rural freedom, the better I was likely to content myself with the narrow limits and formal platbands of Sancta Benedicta, with silent hosts of white-robed sisters gliding like ghosts along the dim alleys.

"Meanwhile, my education progressed. I was instructed, not only in the secrets of the confectionary, but the grand mysteries of the Christian faith. I became a devout Catholic, as well as an expert comfit-maker. On my entrance into the convent, I was scarcely ten years old; and, ere I attained my fifteenth year, even the envy of Sisters Clara and Ofilia admitted me to be a

master of my art. Already, I had defied them by more than one chef-d'œuvre of inventive genius, especially by certain comfits of candied pistachio nuts, scented with amber, and enrolled in leaf of gold, concocted as an express token of duty to the Lady Abbess, when she dispatched her annual offering of confectionary to the most reverend Archbishop of Toledo. Yet, strange to tell, the older I grew, and the more I excelled, the more I was thwarted and macerated; and though I had now tamed down my spirit to submit unresistingly to the heavy penances imposed upon me, I sometimes cursed my life for very bitterness.

"One day, when after having suffered some syrup to lose its colour on the stove, of which sister Clara was in need for the candying of some double violets whereof it was her custom to forward a gift every spring to an eminent canon of the Church of Oviêdo, a distant kinsman of her own (or, as the old gardener, Pedro, had hinted to me, her unavowed son), I was suddenly summoned to the presence of the Superior, whom I had not seen for months. — Satisfied that I was about to undergo a severe reprimand, and,

probably, some new mode of penance, I could scarcely conceal my sullenness, as, with downcast eyes, I entered her august presence and kneeled down to receive the signification of her pleasure.

"'Balthazar, my poor lad!'—said she, addressing me in a tone of more amenity than was her wont, 'I have grievous tidings to communicate to thee.'

"Instantly recurring to the farm, and those who had supplied the place of kinsmanship to my childhood, I hazarded in an inquiring tone the name of Pepito and Dolores.

"'They are well, or I, at least, have no news of their mischance,' said the Abbess, with dignified contempt. 'The intelligence I would unfold, boy, is of far more cruel import than the decease of a Castilian peasant. An unhappy change hath occurred in thy destinies, Balthazar. Thou art about to quit the convent!—'

"My heart leapt within me at the word.

"'*For ever!*' persisted the Abbess, in a sepulchral tone, discerning, perhaps, the levity with which I was hearkening to her announcement.

"My countenance again brightened. But I judiciously concealed my joy, by inclining my

head towards the earth; and, conceiving that her denunciation had now taken proper effect, the Abbess attempted to neutralize the terrors of her intelligence.

"'I own to thee, my son,' she resumed, 'that even wert thou not summoned hence by unimpugnable authority, it had been impossible to prolong much longer thy sojourn within these sacred gates; whence those of thy sex are, by the vow of our holy order, rigorously excluded. Thou art no longer a child, Balthazar'—(God knows, the venerable lady and her coadjutresses had treated me as nothing else!)—'and, in regard to thine advancing years, I had purposed to dispose of thee at Whitsuntide in the household of my grand-nephew, the Bishop of Leon. But heaven is above all! Thy destinies are removed out of my hands; and I am forced, my poor youth, to leave half accomplished the good deed of thy conversion, and surrender thee to the perils and dangers of the world.'

"Dear perils! blessed dangers!—how the mere menace caused my young blood to thrill!—The only perils I could figure to myself were those by

wood or wave, avalanches, mountain torrents, and sea-storms, such as I had read of in the lives of the saints.

"'In a word, Balthazar,' said the old lady, who had favoured me with so many, 'thou art away to court!'

"Involuntarily I raised my joyous face to gaze open-mouthed on the superior.

"The Prince of Asturias, whom the mother of God and her blessed saints preserve,' quoth she, 'hath sent for thee to St Ildefonso.'

"'For me, madam!—the Infant hath sent for ME?' was all I could articulate.

"'A grace for which thou art indebted to my consideration,' resumed the Abbess. 'Some days ago (the very evening when I was horror-struck by the assertion of Sister Ofilia, that, notwithstanding her express prohibition, thou hadst twice been seen lurking near the garden whereto the sisters of the house are admitted for their hour of recreation), an express arrived here from my noble kinsman, the Archbishop, requiring the recipe for compounding certain comfits of pistachio nuts, scented with amber, whereof Don Philip had partaken when, being seized one

day, after a prolonged sitting of the council, with a cough, from irritation and exhaustion, the Archbishop dutifully produced his comfit-box till better refreshment was forthcoming. His Highness' palate, Balthazar, was tickled with the flavour of that idle invention of thy leisure!'—

"'O happy comfits! — O thrice fortunate pistachios,'—cried I, in a transport of loyalty.

"'But instead of contenting myself with forwarding to my lord the Archbishop,' resumed the Abbess, 'the instructions of which he stood in need, I acquainted him that the author of the auspicious confection was wholly at his service. His lordship, it appears, hastened to make the same dutiful tender to the prince; and, lo! I have before me the sign-manual of Don Philip, attaching thee from this day forth, at a salary of one hundred reals monthly, to the service of St Ildefonso.'"

"Let no man presume to opine from what quarter will blow the trade wind of his fortunes!" exclaimed the notary, fancying that some comment was required of him. "Promoted at court per favour of a dish of comfits!—The Lord be good to us!—Parchment and pounce are little

likely to speed a poor English sinner so far as even the porter's lodge of Windsor Castle. Marry, it must have been a right happy day, Master Balthazar, that set you free from the bondage of the old women of Sancta Benedicta?"

"Sweet and sour commingle in every human triumph," replied the confectioner. "At the moment of my departure for Madrid, laden with the gifts and good wishes of my benefactresses, I could almost have wept over my emancipation. And lo! just as the breath of the free air without the walls, and the long-lost sight of the dancing waters and quivering trees began to restore my consciousness of joy, a withered hand was laid upon my bridle-rein, and, drawing me aside out of hearing of the royal courier I was about to accompany to St Ildefonso, poor Dolores whispered a word of warning in my ear."

"'I received thy message,' muttered she, 'that the peremptory commands laid on thee admitted no leisure for a visit to the farm; and forthwith hurried hither to arrest thy departure. Balthazar Sanchez! Go not, O go not to Madrid! Avoid St Ildefonso!—Tremble at the aspect of Don Philip of Spain.—There is not an hour's

safety for thee, my son, after quitting the gates of this convent!'

"'Explain, explain,' cried I, finding that the courier was growing impatient.

"'I cannot—I dare not! Life and death are balanced over thy head by a single hair; yet can I do no more than bid thee beware!' faltered Dolores.

"In a few incoherent words, I explained the peremptory necessity of obedience to the royal command; referring her to the Lady Abbess for confirmation of my assertion.

"'Since needs must, then,' murmured the affectionate woman, with a sigh, 'I can but implore thee, my poor Balthazar, on my bended knees, to keep close to thy vocation. Divide thy days betwixt duty and devotion.—Grow not an idle wassailer like the rest, nor clap hands with chance companions;—above all, range not beyond the precincts of the palace. There are those on the watch to do thee evil, who, for dear life's sake, would not adventure within the purlieus of St Ildefonso."

"The authority of the king's messenger put a close to her extraordinary apostrophe; and,

great as was my amazement at the good woman's mysterious vehemence, my attention was soon diverted by the novelty of the scenes that presented themselves, after hurrying from her presence. — My early experience was comprised within a walk of the farm—my experience of the last five years within the still narrower compass of a high-walled garden; and the rapture of my soul, in gazing once more upon the expanded face of Nature, is scarcely to be described in words. The royal messenger,—a man accustomed to sit in saddle three hundred days of the year,—laughed outright at my ecstasy on viewing the most familiar objects;—a willow overhanging a brook, a tree engarlanded with ivy, a bank overgrown with wild flowers!—

"'How will it be with thee, youngster,' cried he, 'when thou beholdest the majestic walls of St Ildefonso?'

"But the majestic walls of St Ildefonso said nothing to my soul. The scene was but an enlarged portraiture of what I had left behind at Sancta Benedicta; and there, as at the convent, I was doomed to yearn after green fields ver-

dant forests, and all the cheerfulness of sylvan freedom.

"Such satisfaction, however, as courtly advancement could bestow, was lavished on me, even to prodigality. Without any announcement of my arrival, the prince was pleased to detect the cunning of my hand in the very first collation served up to the royal table after my instalment; and to signify his approval, by requiring that my services should be dedicated to his sole delectation. Overawed, in spite of myself, by the mysterious denunciations of my poor foster-mother, I had already determined to confine myself exclusively to the discharge of my duties; and, my efforts thus highly appreciated, I applied all the force of my ingenuity to the invention of new dainties for the royal palate. Every day, so long as the summer fruits hung ripe on the bough, I strove to enhance their flavour by my confections; and, on winter days, when they hung there no longer, I recalled them to the memory of Don Philip by some saccharine infusion. Heaven knows, the unhappy prince had need of syrups and confects to sweeten his imagi-

nation; beset as he was with grand inquisitors, chirurgeons, generals, admirals, and all the unholy army of martyr-makers, that surrounds the throne of a bigot prince. From my poor chamber, adjoining the roof of St Ildefonso, and commanding at least a view of the open country, I truly pitied him;—he, whose prospects were so bounded—he, who seemed to build his hopes of heaven on rendering earth a hell to his fellow-men.

"Albeit I strictly adhered to the counsels of Dolores, and, devoted to my daily duties, never attempted to sally forth from the palace-gates; at odd moments, when my work was done, and the court engaged in attendance on the royal table or mass, I managed to glide out; and, on pretence of seeking fresh annis or coriander for my comfits, obtain a view, through the gilded latices of the pleasure-gardens, of the court ladies, parading in their robes of satin and brocade, to feed the peacocks that clustered round the marble fountains, or the gay Indian carp that glittered in the limpid waters below. One or other of the younger dames was usually loitering, gittern or lute in hand, beneath the dark shadows of the cedars or broad-leaved catalpa trees,

shedding a melancholy charm about the place; and at such times, monotonous as was my daily routine of life, I felt that there was joy in being an inmate of St Ildefonso. It was only when a procession of inquisitors reached the palace with tidings of some grievous arrest or horrible *auto-da-fé*, destroying the peace of families and causing my blood to freeze at the recital, that I sometimes repined at having to live and die the household servant of Philip of Spain.

"Among the happier privileges of my vocation, was that of taking my turn in the daily distribution of the provisions remaining after the meals of the royal household. Every morning after the ringing of the Angelus, the poor were regaled in one of the minor courts of the palace; and the constant accession of pretendants to a share in the dole, afforded sufficient proof how highly it was valued by the humble population of the environs. Pilgrims and mendicants thronged to the gate,—infirm and aged persons, who could not dig, and to beg were ashamed; while others of better degree seemed to find especial pleasure in feeding on the crumbs that fell from a king's table.

"Among the latter, about a twelvemonth after my admission into the royal establishment, I began to notice a female of lofty stature, attired in a mourning habit; who appeared to have seen better days, and to whom I was careful to assign a liberal portion of the spoil. Her face I was unable to discern, so closely was it concealed in the loose cape of her sable dress. Her deportment was that of a person infirm from sickness, rather than advanced in years; and, one morning, when she advanced to receive a basket of bread and fruit which I had set aside for her, I ventured to add an inquiry, whether or not she was in such bodily need as to accept of — I was about to add, such alms as a menial may offer, when, suddenly raising her head so as to look me directly in the face, she deprived me of all power to complete my inquiry. I felt sinking into nothing under the scrutiny of her dark and piercing eyes!—

"'Is there aught, signora, in which I can do you service or pleasure?' was my amended inquiry; and, unconsciously, I uttered the words with the reverence due to a queen.

"For a moment, the stranger remained silent

— her fearful glance still riveted upon my face.

"'Meet me this evening, at dusk, at the western extremity of the avenue of catalpas!'— said she, in a low concentrated voice.

"'The gardens of St Ildefonso are closed at that hour, saving for those connected with the Court,' I faltered in reply,—not daring to say, in plain terms, the gates of the royal gardens unclose not for mendicants.

"'No matter,—I shall be there,' replied the stranger; and, folding around her more closely the loose cape of serge which replaced the basquiua of a more prosperous class, she turned an angle of the court, and disappeared.

"And now, nothing could exceed my perturbation. A year within the precincts of a Court had initiated me tolerably well into the tender mysteries of love passages and assignations. But the age and deportment of my new acquaintance repressed all inclination to hope that her business with me was of a tender nature. She might come, nowever, as the emissary of others; and, though still secretly in awe of one who seemed born for the old Castilian fashion of wearing a

dagger in her garter, I was true to my appointment.

"A dark figure awaited me under the third catalpa tree.

" 'Balthazar!' exclaimed the voice of the stranger, in a scarcely-articulate gasp of delighted surprise, 'art thou come indeed?'—

" 'Thou hadst my word, signora,' replied I. Then, fearing that, although the gardens were nearly deserted, our interview might attract attention, I took her by the hand; and, leading her through the dusk, into the deep recesses of a cypress grove, placed her on one of its most secluded seats.

" 'Your pleasure, signora?'—said I, in a low voice. But no answer was vouchsafed save only broken sobs. 'Your pleasure, signora?' I again repeated, fearing that I was to be made the dupe of a scene of pretended emotion; when, lo! instead of replying, the stranger flung her arms passionately round me, and strained me passionately to her bosom. My first impulse was to extricate myself from these unsought embraces.

" 'Balthazar!' faltered the weeping woman,

"canst thou not discriminate between the caresses of a wanton and of a mother? Boy, boy!—the bosom to which thou art pressed is that which cherished thine infancy! My son—my own—my only! O, that thus, by stealth, and in shadows of death, we should be fated to meet again!'

"Great as was my amazement at this outburst of tenderness, the forewarnings of my good Dolores forbad me to give way to the impulses of tenderness wakening in my heart.

"'And how am I to determine the truth of all this?' said I, labouring to repress my emotion.

"'Doth not the intensity of an agonized mother's voice bring conviction with it?'—she replied, relaxing her embrace. 'Doth Nature whisper nothing to thy soul?—Submit thee, then, at least, to the testimony of vulgar evidence. I adjure thee, Balthazar Sanchez, by the home and guardians of thine infancy, by yonder farm on the Manzanares' side, by Pepito and Dolores thy foster-parents, by the convent of Sancta Benedicta, by——'

"'All these things may have been reported to thee by others,' said I, still mistrustful.

"'By the stain, then, wherewith, in the hour of birth, thy right arm above the wrist was disfigured, I challenge thee, as my offspring, and claim of thee the honour and homage of a son!'—said the stranger, in stern displeasure; and, this time, my answer consisted in dropping on my knees at her feet! But though thus tacitly recognising her claim, no yearning of the affections impelled me to lavish upon her the caresses of a child. I was awe-struck—overpowered—but not softened by the discovery that I was no longer an orphan. Nature seemed to forewarn me that there were humiliating secrets in store for me; and that I was already encompassed by the snares announced by Dolores.

"I was not long left in suspense. My mother, (or let me at once assign to her the name by which she at length announced herself) the Signora Rachaëla Sanchez, aware that the moments of our interview were numbered, suffered me not to waste my time in interrogation.

"'Thou wouldst doubtless know, Balthazar,' said she, enfolding her arms around me as I sat beside her on the marble bench, 'to what end I have thus strangely prolonged my separation

from the child of my flesh? The moon hath not yet revolved, my son, upon my sojourn in Spain! I come to thee, after an exile in foreign lands; after fifteen years of toil and privation, under the scorching suns of Africa; and if the coldness with which thou hast welcomed me arise from the fears inspired by my mendicant's habit, arise and be of good cheer. I am rich, Balthazar. Though driven into banishment, a worse than beggar, the God of my fathers hath prospered me; and I return to my native country (albeit in secret, and under peril of the laws), opulent enough to bribe, if not the clemency of the King, at least the mercy of the executioner!'

"'The executioner?'—faltered I; the secret misgivings suggested by the Israelitish name of Rachaëla, gradually increasing.

"'Hath the woman Dolores so far fallen from her pledge, as to keep thee ignorant of the misfortunes of thy parents, that thou art thus astounded?' cried my mysterious mother in a low hoarse voice. 'Not content with defiling thy young life by contact with a Christian congregation——'

"A cry of horror, bursting from the very depth

of my soul, interrupted her disclosures. 'Speak, speak!' I exclaimed, trembling with apprehension. '*Who* am I—and *what* art *thou*,—who thus overcomest my mind with terrors?'

"'Thou art the circumcised child of persecuted parents, pertaining to the people elect of God,' replied Rachaëla, with haughty defiance; and no sooner had the fearful secret escaped her lips, than in lieu of renewing my intreaties for farther information, I placed my hands upon her lips, imploring her to forbear.

"'Ay!' cried she, with bitterness, having at length wrested away my hand—'like the rest, poor miserable poltroon, thou shrinkest from her on whose head a price is set by the minions of the law! Thou wouldst even deny, I doubt not, thy persecuted creed!'

"'*My* creed?—It is none of mine!'—I exclaimed, with indignation. 'The very name of Jew is loathsome in my ears!—To the God of Christians was I taught to bend my knees. Among Christians have I abided—among Christians will I still abide. Unless thou art some messenger of Satan sent to work the perdition of my soul, away with thee at once, lest I be tempted——'

"'*To what?*'—interrupted Rachaëla; 'to surrender me into the hands of the blood-seeking Inquisition, or of the stony-hearted Prince, their master and thine?—*Do it!*—Summon the guard! Resign to their tender mercies the mother who bore thee; that they may butcher her, even as they did thy father, the husband of her youth, as a sport for the populace of Madrid!'

"Unconsciously I approached, and took her hand.

"'Was it not a pleasant recreation for them!' continued Rachaëla, in an appalling whisper. 'An *auto-da-fé!*—The Inquisition, with its banners, and torches, and fiend-like familiars!—The well-piled faggots, the resin, the tar-barrel,—to torture, both in the flesh and the spirit, the last moments of poor Caspar Sanchez, the mildest, truest, kindest, of all the sons of his tribe! Caspar, who never wronged a fellow-creature of a doit, nor injured a hair of mortal head! But he was a Jew—a proscribed Jew!—Driven by royal edict from the fertile fields of Spain, he had presumed to return (even as I have now returned) by stealth and in disguise; in order that his first-born child might see the light beneath the same roof where he had

first beheld it. And, lo ! the Christian murderers, whose creed professes pardon and meekness and peace, detected us in the worship of the God of Israel, and plunged him into the dungeons of the Hermandad ! Then it was that, escaping in the darkness of the night, my infant in my arms, I preserved *thy* life, Balthazar, by entrusting thee to the honest couple whom the humanity of thy poor father had, in his better days, preserved from ruin. Even fallen as we were, Pepito and Dolores swore to become parents to the orphan child of Caspar Sanchez.'

"'And nobly fulfilled their undertaking,' said I, firmly.

"'Tis false !' cried my mother. 'In accepting, for thy behoof, the small sum I had been able to bear away, they solemnly undertook to use no efforts to detach thee from thy father's faith.'

"'Nor did they. No word of religious instruction did I ever receive from their lips. It was only when, with coming years, they saw the turbulent spirit of the circumcised boy abandoned to their charge, expose him to danger of detection, that they placed me in the convent of Sancta Benedicta, and thus wrought the good work of my salvation.'

"'And of my revenge!' added my mother, in a low concentrated voice. 'Balthazar little dreamed those poor, bigoted, Castilian boors to how great a deed they were devoting their nursling! I have told thee that, to save thy life, I fled before the enemies of thy father. To avenge his death have I borne thenceforward the burden of existence. To thy hand, boy, the deed of retribution is decreed. In the Word of the God of Israel is it written—'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life!' and, lo! a royal one is assigned to repay the death of my murdered Caspar!—Philip of Spain, the blood-thirstiest of her blood-thirsty princes, the favouring and favoured son of the Holy Hermandad, must die by thy hand!'"

The gradually increasing emotion with which the venerable Spaniard had been pursuing his narrative, now thoroughly overcame him. Reclining breathless in his chair, he wrung his hands in utter agony; till the notary, after much soothing expostulation, entreated him to pass briefly over such passages of his history as were too afflicting to his soul.

"Be it so!"—murmured the old gentleman, when at length he regained the power of utterance.

"Let it suffice thee, in a few fearful words, that, at that first interview and many succeeding ones, the implacable widow of Caspar Sanchez left no argument unattempted to prove that I owed it as a sacred duty to the memory of my father to offer up in atonement the life of Don Philip! The facilities afforded by my confidential post rendered the horrible deed only too easy of accomplishment. Furnished by my mother with the slow but subtle poisons of the East, I had only to decree the death of the Prince of Asturias, escape with Rachaëla to the coast ere the effects of the poison were manifest, and, hastily embarking, betake myself to the land of my forefathers;—and glowing, indeed, were the terms in which Rachaëla described to my bewildered senses the joys of an Oriental clime!—

"Fearful,—oh, fearful was my temptation!—Not that for a moment I inclined towards the commission of so great a crime; but, on discovering my abhorrence, my mother astuciously addressed her endeavours to obtain an influence over my affections,—pretending to listen to the arguments with which I endeavoured to convert her to the religion of peace;—while, ever and anon, artfully reverting

to the virtues, the sufferings, the frightful end of my father. Then, when satisfied of having roused in my bosom the dormant filial instincts so potent in all human hearts, she failed not to threaten, in case of my persisting in my resistance, to give herself up to the Holy Tribunal, and suffer death as a Jewess, before the face of God and of her son!

"Perplexed,—bewildered,—at one moment on the point of myself accusing her as a regicide —the next, almost disposed to become an assassin rather than endanger the life of the author of my days,—how I longed for a renewal of those peaceful times of old on the banks of the Manzanares,—how I regretted the uneventful moments of the convent of Sancta Benedicta!—

"The perils in which I stood,—the intemperate revilings of Rachaëla,—the revulsion of feeling produced by loving as a mother one whom I abhorred as a Jewess,—at length so irritated my blood, as to throw me into a raging fever. In the ravings of delirium, my secret transpired; and, though at first treated as the delusion of insanity, the perpetually recurring terms of my adjurations, at length determined the royal con-

fessor (who had been brought by my fellow-servants to witness my excitement) to institute an investigation.

"Spare me the rest,—When, at the close of many months, I was restored to perfect consciousness, I found that the fires of the Inquisition had again been kindled, and that another victim was gone to rejoin the manes of Caspar Sanchez!

"My first impulse was to depart from a country watered with the blood of my kindred. But the contempt with which, on my recovery, I found myself treated by my comrades who affected to regard me as a recanted Jew, determined me to tarry for awhile, lest it should be supposed I fled from fear of their misusage While thus irresolute, I was summoned into the presence of the comptroller of the royal household, who (after bidding me bless, upon my knees, the clemency of Don Philip), acquainted me that the Prince, being about to embark for England to solemnize his union with Queen Mary, had decided that I should form one of the royal suite.

"'Don Philip condescends to consider,' he continued, 'that no stronger evidence of fidelity could be afforded than by your steady resistance

to the evil suggestions of your mother. To reward, therefore, the stanchness of your faith as a Catholic, and loyalty as a subject, he doubles your salary as chief confectioner, and bids you prepare for immediate embarkation.'

"Rebellion against such a mandate was impossible. But I was, in fact, overjoyed to be released from Spain. A residence at St Ildefonso, darkened by such dreadful reminiscences, was insupportable. Madrid was worse. The church of the Dominicans, where sentence had been pronounced upon my parents, and the Plaza where their horrible destiny was accomplished, were alike hateful to my soul. The invisible hand of the Holy Hermandad seemed armed against my life.—Mysterious voices ever murmured in the air, prophesying evil; and whenever it was my chance to meet a procession of the order of St Dominic, the blood seemed frozen in my veins!—

"Under such circumstances, Master Notary, judge how great was my relief to disembark upon the strand of Britain!—The land, as we sailed betwixt the wooded banks of the Southampton river, looked green and tranquil as a dove's nest,

and, though the minds of the people were disposed against this Spanish alliance, desiring to behold their Queen wedded with a countryman of their own, yet was our reception and progress bright with overflowing hospitality.

"It needs not to enlarge upon the events that followed. The favour I enjoyed in the eyes of the Prince sufficed to recommend me to the grace of her Majesty,—who, in her fulsome fondness for a bridegroom eleven years her junior, used to requite, with the most lavish prodigality, the trifling gifts offered as tokens of his respect. Among these, according to the custom of Spain, sweetmeats were a common offering; and, on occasion of his Highness presenting to her Majesty on her birth-day a comfit-box, richly encrusted with jewels, and filled with his favourite confection of candied pistachio nuts, Don Philip took occasion to relate the story of his faithful Balthazar, whose abilities he was pleased to estimate far beyond their desserts.

"'The youth must henceforward be especially attached to my household,' replied the Queen, at the close of her royal husband's narrative; and no

small relief was it to my mind that, when Don Philip, weary of the thraldom of wedlock, affected to be recalled to Spain by business of state, I was allowed to remain behind, in the quiet verdant seclusion of Richmond. There, even there, did Nature seem to take me once more to her bosom! In this sylvan retreat, the peace of other days came back to me. Amid the blending beauties of its woods and waters, I tried to lose the impression of my past afflictions.

"The sole embitterment of my life arose from the religious persecutions which soon filled the kingdom with tears and anguish. Though the temper and constitution of the country forbad the introduction of the Inquisition, as at one period meditated by the Queen, the intolerant spirit of Philip's congenial wife caused the flames of persecution to be kindled; and, in lieu of Pagans and Jews, Christian now consigned his fellow-Christian to the stake!—

"Against such a breach of divine law, my soul revolted; and in many a secret prayer did I commend myself to the Almighty, imploring him to soften the heart of the Queen, and so modify

the belief of the people that the religion of Christ might become all in all, and faith, hope, and charity govern the institutions of the land.

"'Beware!' would oftentimes exclaim that prudent and tender soul, Mistress Alice Harkwell, who afterwards became my wife and household comforter—'beware lest these unorthodox sentiments be suspected. Thine opinions, Master Balthazar, savour of the faggot and tar-barrel. By my sooth! thou art already half a Protestant.'

"And so, true to her insinuation, on the death of the Queen, and the accession of the glorious Elizabeth, I became *wholly* a Protestant, and her spouse. It was not, as many inferred, the desire to retain my place at court which opened my ears to the arguments wherewith the chaplains of her Majesty laboured to enlighten the darkness of her faithful servitors; but that from the Popish cause there emanated an odour of human blood, too grievously reminding me of the fate of my parents! Persecution and intolerance were the handmaidens of the Roman Church;—and, somehow or other, the Jewish blood within me seemed

to curdle in my veins at the very sight of the uplifted Host.

"At the Queen's coronation, Master Notary, trust me there was not a more devoted Protestant kneeling in the aisles, than he by whose skill was compounded the master-piece of confectionery that glittered at the banquet as chief decoration of the royal table. Your countrymen came forthwith flocking to the palace, desiring to be instructed in my art. Scholars had I, almost beyond my power of reckoning; and it hath been pretty generally affirmed that to poor Balthazar Sanchez, England is indebted for the introduction of the art of comfit-making. Though now and then a jealous rival presumed to whisper of me as the 'Spanish Jew,' none dared to gainsay the award when, in my old age, the Queen's gracious Majesty permitted me to retire from Court for the enjoyment of my means, retaining to the end of my days the title of honour of her royal confectioner."

"Nor needs there a better proof, Master Sanchez, of the good renown wherewith you have borne it," interrupted old Trackit, "than that

the grandniece of your late spouse (who, failing issue of your body, you adopted as heir) should have been sought in marriage by no less worthy a gentleman than Sir Carnaby Savile."

"A fig for Sir Carnaby Savile!"—cried Sanchez, filling his glass from the flagon of dry Malaga standing on the table beside him. "Sir Carnaby would have mated with my mother, Rachaëla, or any maiden or matron of her tribe, upon sufficient incitement of gold. No more!—Enough of my heir-at-law and of his virtues.—They are not of such weight with me as to obstruct my long-meditated purpose of giving to the poor a third portion of my substance; and so pleading to the Lord's mercy for the errors of my fathers, and my own levity, if levity there be, in changing the form of my devotions. Albeit the worldly blessings wherewith the Almighty hath blessed me, may be esteemed tokens of divine forgiveness, there are times when my soul hath been exceeding sorrowful with perplexity betwixt the Jewish creed to which I was born, the Catholic faith in which I was nurtured, and the Protestant church to which I now adhere.

"If I have sinned, however, in this thing, it hath

been with good intent, and soon may the blessings of the poor confirm the promises of grace to the dying moments of THE QUEEN'S COMFIT-MAKER."*

* Balthazar Zanca, or Sanchez, who came to this country in the train of Philip II, was the first royal confectioner attached to the English court. After being converted to Protestantism, he died in 1602, at his mansion at Tottenham Cross, having contributed to the cost of the brick cross erected by Dean Wood in 1600, in place of the wooden one then standing, and erected, at his sole expense, an almshouse for eight poor persons. The residence of Balthazar Sanchez, is now an inn, and the almshouses in question, remain in good preservation.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER,

OR

MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

BY "THE OLD BACHELOR IN PARIS."

THE most enthusiastic panegyrist of the discipline and subordination of the British army must, if a man of Christian sympathies, connect such painful associations with the words, "military punishment," that, if accidentally pronounced in his hearing in the midst of a brilliant field-day or royal review, the striking scene forfeits half its charm in his eyes. The "ha! ha!" of the trumpet breathes discordantly in his ears; and the symmetrical lines of apparently mechanical

figures present only a mass of deformity and confusion.

It is not so in France. There is nothing revolting to the finer feelings of humanity in the process by which the country clod is shaped into the trimly, agile, active soldier. In admiring the soldier-like array of a regiment on parade or manœuvring in the field, we feel that we are looking upon *men*, and men upon whom the frailties of mortal nature will never draw down the chastisement of dogs.

Among the numerous spectacles that recreate the eye of the stranger in Paris, is one that fills the mind of every Englishman with painful reflections—*i. e.*, a military degradation.

"Come with me to the Place Vendôme," cried I, the other day, to a country cousin of mine, lately on a visit to the French metropolis (a somewhat snivelling philanthropist, who arrived here, charged with a catalogue of eleven hundred questions upon the origin of truth, much after the fashion of the English philosopher, described in St Pierre's 'Indian Cottage').—"I have something interesting to show you."

"I thank you," he replied. "I have seen quite as much as I desire of the bronze column."

"You were blind else!" cried I, knowing that he had been passing and repassing it hourly for ten days previously.

"And as to mounting to the top," he resumed, "I should as soon think of climbing the chimney of a steam-engine!"

"Or I either!" was my reply; "more particularly since, during your sojourn here, you have forced me to survey the city from the pinnacle of the temple of Notre Dame, and the wing of the telegraph at Montmartre, in spite of my declarations of preferring any other mode of rising in the world."

"But you are dragging me all this time towards the Place Vendôme," quoth my cousin Peter, as we pushed onwards in a throng, from which cries of—"*Allons, allons!—on dégrade! on dégrade!*" arose in all directions.

"Because I want you to witness a curious exhibition."

"Ay, ay? In the department of natural history, or of the fine arts?"—

"In the simple history of human nature," was

my rejoinder; and methought I heard a contemptuous whistle issue from beneath my cousin Peter's amber spectacles. "I want you to see a military punishment."

"A military punishment!—God's life, sir! for what do you take me?—A man of *my* sensibility become an eye-witness of so disgusting an incident?" cried he (with a countenance such as used to be worn by hundreds of auditors of Sir Francis Burdett's humanity-harangues of former times, graphically describing, previous to a Westminster election, the horrors of flogging in the British army).

"Your sensibility is in no manner of danger," said I, quietly resuming my hold of his arm, which the start of my cousin Peter had dislodged. "For the first time in your life, you are about to see a soldier punished like a Christian, rather than like a brute."

At that moment we entered the Place Vendôme; that sober, solid, architectural monument which, replete as it is with historical associations, has undergone no defeatures from the hand of time or the hand of taste, from the epoch when the Scotch adventurer, Law, inhabited one of the

most splendid hotels, obtained at the cost of hundreds of thousands of French victims, to the present hour.

Though the bold and salient masks of granite, which still smile complacently, or frown majestically over the basement stories of its noble habitations, are the same which smiled or frowned upon the tripping marquises or red-heeled abbés of the reign of Louis XV,—upon the carts conveying the same to execution after the deposition of Louis XVI, —upon the massacres of two revolutions,—upon the military ovations of the empire, and the puppet-show processions arising from the restoration of the bi-furcal line of Bourbon, their comely faces remain unwrinkled by the lapse of the couple of centuries that have played such fantastic tricks with the numerous generations of human visages succeeding to their original contemporaries.

On the day in question, an autumnal sun was shining out brilliantly on the public offices,—the *Quartier Général*, the *Chancellerie*, and others, which occupy so large a portion of the old octagon; distinguished from the *hôtels garnis*, their neighbours, only by the discoloured tri-coloured flags

pendent over their several *portes cochères;*—and on the present occasion, by the fact that, while the windows of the latter were crowded, from *entresol* to *mansarde*, with curious spectators of all nations, but especially with British, those of the governmental hotels were empty; the inhabitants (as of all public offices all over the world), being scrupulously engaged in the discharge of their public duties.

"A splendid trophy, certainly!" quoth my cousin Peter, glancing, as well as the intensity of sunlight would allow, from the base to the summit of the noble column—(which, though familiar with it for the last six years, I never survey without admiration). "Still, I can't make up my mind to the statue of Napoleon! 'Tis vulgar, sir, immensely vulgar,—and altogether unworthy the memory of the defunct Emperor of the most polite nation in Europe."

"No doubt you would have preferred a Winged Victory, or a Fame blowing her trumpet on a china orange, as on the roof of the office of the 'Morning Post!'"—cried I, with indignation; "or Napoleon himself, perhaps, in his Dalmatic

robes of estate, looking like a play-actor in a Roman cuirass and helmet, like the effigy of General Hollis in Westminster Abbey!"

"I don't say but I might," replied Peter, coolly.

"Instead of which, you behold one of the greatest men of the greatest era 'in his habit as he lived' to regenerate the fallen kingdom of France! But, stay!—I may spare myself a world of rhetoric. Think you that yonder group of peasants, to whom the timber-toed Invalid who accompanies them,—some veteran uncle or grandsire,—is pointing out, with tears in his eyes, the figure of his old master,—his *camarade*,—his *petit caporal*,—would have experienced the feelings sparkling now in their looks at sight of the familiar 'Nap,'—in his *redingote grise*,—if the column of the *grande armée* had been surmounted by a Winged Victory, resembling those of the gilt candelabra on an inn chimney-piece; or even a man in an imperial robe, looking like Talma in a tragedy?—But, hark!"

At that moment, the gay strains of a military band were borne towards us; becoming gradually

clearer and clearer, and more and more inspiriting, till we caught sight of a gallant company of infantry marching in double quick time into the square; saluting the *Quartier Général* as it passed, with a salutation that seemed addressed rather to the great man looking complacently down upon them from the sunny summit of the column.

Quick as thought, troop now succeeded troop; sappers and miners, hussars, lancers, cuirassiers, dragoons light and heavy,—companies, in short, from every regiment composing the garrison of Paris, each in its best array, pipeclayed and burnished, bright and shining, to form a hollow oblong square, lining the whole of the south-eastern moiety of the Place Vendôme; at the head of which was stationed the fine brass band, whose exciting strains were to impart a stirring effect to the solemnity of the day. In the centre of the square (the men having taken up their ground in time), the officers began to form into groups; while *beyond* the line was a second *cordon* of stupid starers, chiefly of that Pariæ *caste* —the *gamins de Paris;* and beyond the *cordon* of vagabonds, a collection of intermingled carriages,

cabriolets, carts, drays, trucks, and water-tons,—such as usually beset the outskirts of an English race-course or review.

The scene was a striking one. Both military and civilians grew eager for the appearance of the delinquents, to witness whose degradation from their position in the French army, they were assembled; and, though the loungers in the windows above (from the fair young English children, clapping their little hands for glee, at the *mansarde* of the Hôtel de Londres, to the stout old Indian General, surveying the motley scene from his hospitable residence opposite), might admire the discipline of the troops, or point to the glittering arms or white aprons, and tremendous beards of the pioneers, the crowd itself seemed strictly absorbed by the fate of the forthcoming prisoners.

At length there glided into the centre of the square,—amid groups of well-padded generals, with snow-white mustachios, and well-bronzed colonels, with iron-grey,—two spruce figures—"gentlemen in black"—with white cravats and varnished boots; *i. e.* the judge-advocate and his clerk, appointed to read to the prisoners their

sentence; and soon afterwards, a sudden rush of the mob (especially of its more ragged portion) towards the *Quartier Général*, announced that the point of interest lay in that direction.

"Whither are those blackguards running?"—quoth my cousin Peter, revolving on his heel towards the commandant's residence, as if his boot contained a pivot.

"To look at blackguards greater than themselves!" I replied. "Did you not see the prisoners arrive just now at head-quarters, in a *panier à salade?*"

"In a salad basket?"—cried Peter, aghast, much in Mrs Siddons's tone of surprise on learning that a mercantile gentleman of her acquaintance had died in his *bureau*. "How gat they there, I marvel?"—

"A *panier à salade*," said I, didactically (with a view to his future "Notes of a Traveller"), "is the species of hermetically-sealed police-van, in which criminals are conveyed in France to the place of execution, and refractory soldiers to the scene of degradation. Look!—The fellows are coming forth from the *porte-cochère!*—There are two of them, in the centre of the file of soldiers

with loaded muskets; to make way for which, the mob falls back on either side, like the waves of the Red Sea for the passage of the Israelites. See how the *gamins*, in their ragged *blouses*, hurry to keep up with them, in hopes of catching a glimpse of their sinful or sorrowful countenances!"

We were now in the thick of the throng, pushing and elbowing among the rest, with the due allowance of imprecations bestowed upon each fresh effort we made to advance towards the column; immediately fronting which, were stationed the general and his état major before whom the prisoners were to be marched for the hearing of their sentence. Hitherto, I had wasted no attention on the individuals whose elbows punched my ribs, or whose oaths invaded my ears, conceiving them to belong to the vulgar herd of profane swearers and punchers. But when, on my cousin Peter's ejaculation of joy at catching sight of the prisoners, one deep sigh — a sigh almost amounting to a gasp — burst from the bosom of a pale, sickly, young peasant girl, who was leaning on the arm of a decrepit woman by my side, I could not help fearing that they might be more than commonly interested in the fate of

the delinquents, and I consequently moderated my observations. I even contrived to obtain for them, by pushing aside a great lubberly English schoolboy who stood gnawing a hunch of *gâteau de Nanterre* to my right, a peep into the square similar to the one enjoyed sideways by myself and Peter.

A roll of drums now startled us to look again towards the base of the column; in front of which, midway between the two lines of soldiers, stood two miserable-looking beings, clad in an ignominious prison-uniform, the one of grey the other of black cloth, with caps to match, and wooden shoes; the long cloak-shaped capote hanging so as to conceal their handcuffed wrists, and creating a sort of shapeless helplessness, strangely contrasted with the smart and trim vivacity of their former comrades. Mounting guard behind them, stood a file of armed light infantry men; on one side the general-commandant; and, facing them, the spruce judge-advocate, holding an open paper in his hand.

Placed at too great a distance to distinguish by whom the word of command was given, I saw the two prisoners suddenly drop on their knees to

listen to the bitter sentence of the law. The sinner in grey, whose criminality appeared to be a shade less dark than that of the sinner in black, bent down *his* head as he knelt, and, as far as I could judge by his movements, tears were falling from his eyes; but the fellow in black, with unequalled audacity, laughed outright, and kept up a series of buffooneries, as if attempting to excite the risibility of the spectators.

"What are they doing?"—whispered Peter, whose spectacles were at fault.

"Reciting to the prisoners the sentence of their court-martial, as confirmed by the council of war, previous to undergoing a certain term of imprisonment. Already, as you perceive, the men have been stripped of their military uniforms. They are now about to be degraded in the sight of the garrison of Paris; and paraded along the line in their prison clothes, handcuffed and dragging after them each a cannon-ball fastened by a chain round their middle. Expelled the service, they must take leave, as it were, of their comrades, under these humiliating degradations."

"The impudent rascal in black seems as bold as brass!" cried Peter.—"See!—he has risen from

his knees, and they are blindfolding him, while the *boulet* is being fastened on!—Parade him along the line?—Why, the fellow won't stir an inch!"—

"Look again!"—cried I. And Peter had the satisfaction of seeing him impelled onwards smartly, by a soldier holding him by the arm on either side; and soon, the clanking of his chain and the rumbling of the *boulet* against the stones as it dragged after him, asserted that he was in rapid motion. At that moment, not a syllable was breathed along the ranks. "ATTENTION" was the word,—and the word itself was audible from one end of the Place Vendôme to the other, distinct as the striking of a bell.

Once and again the black figure, with blindfolded eyes, shuffled along in its *sabots;* halting at length before the column, there to abide during the punishment of his companion. But the moment the poor lad in grey was harnessed with his *boulet*, a murmur of commiseration arose among the throng.—He was so young!—his countenance was so downcast!—and, though the colour and fashion of his prison-garment announced that *his* transgression was of a very dif-

ferent nature from that of his companion, entailing only three months' detention in a military prison instead of the hulks awaiting the criminal in black (who was under sentence for theft, with attempt to murder the corporal by whom he was taken into custody), the crowd, and more especially the female part of it, seemed of opinion that he was too severely punished.

Proud, even in his broken-heartedness, he evidently scorned to be dragged along like a malefactor; for, though still retaining his downcast countenance, so that his swollen eyelids were scarcely discernible, he walked firm and erect; and the *boulet* moved steadily at his heels, instead of being jerked from stone to stone, as by the movements of his refractory fellow-prisoner. Grey mantle was back again at the column, in half the time the felon had accomplished his ignominious task.

And now, another prolonged roll of the drums announced that a portion of the solemnity of the day was at an end. The *boulets* were taken off; and while the two prisoners, closely flanked and strongly guarded, were posted immediately in front of the column, so as to form a prominent

mark, the band struck up once more its inspiriting strains, and marched past them in quick time ; followed in succession by the whole complement of troops assembled, successively broken up into companies. *That* was the most impressive moment!—the two wretched-looking beings standing there in their infamy, to listen to the cheering measures to which they had so often marched in the performance of their duty, and beholding their comrades, in all the bright array of discipline, proceed cheerily along, while *they* stood shivering in their sabots, not daring to cast a look in their faces!—Sunk as they were, they had still to bear a heavier penalty of their fault!

"Just so can one conceive Lucifer, after his fall, contemplating the upward flight of legions of free and happy angels!"—quoth Peter, who was beginning to snivel. "Alas! poor fellows!—brave soldiers, perhaps, as any here, yet about to be debarred the blessed light of Heaven, and the free use of their limbs. This sunshine is the last that will warm them for months; and, instead of yonder gladsome music, the death-like silence of prison solitude is decreed them!"—

Cousin Peter was prosing on, or rather poeticis-

ing, to his heart's content, when his thin small voice was overpowered by a general shouting from the populace in our vicinity for "*La marchande! La marchande!*"—meaning one of those itinerant venders of filtered water (calling itself iced water), a dozen of which were scattered along the outskirts of the throng, with their gay fountains and plated goblets; as they invariably are in Paris, wherever two or three hundred are gathered together. "A cup of water!" was loudly called for. —Somebody had fainted.

I now remembered with compunction that, intent upon exhibiting to my cousin Peter the minutiæ of a ceremonial so interesting to every friend of humanity, I had forgotten to take care, or even heed, of the two poor women at one time stationed by my side; and now that the crowd had changed its form to yield to the movements of the military (who were wheeling off in companies, and taking up their position on the opposite side of the square, till the prisoners should have marched back again into the general's quarters, and they were at liberty to march themselves back to their own), they were nowhere to be seen. My mind misgave me that it was for one of them water was

required. But, as is usual in case of a swoon, the mob pressed round the fainting person to shut out the fresh air with such assiduous humanity as to intercept all means of satisfying my curiosity.

"Look, look!"—cried Peter, far more interested in the aspect of the military prisoners than in the sprinkling of a young lady's face with filtered water,—"how daring the aspect of that hardened ruffian,—how humbled the looks of his companion! There is plenty of room.—We can advance nearer to them now."—

And the staid prim old bachelor was actually trotted off towards the column, in the wake of a tribe of *gamins* of the lowest description, who were cheering the impudent offender with cries worthy of the intellect of their class—of "*Vive la Marsellaise!*"

As we drew towards the column, a ragged hat half full of *gros sous*, and smelling of halfpence and humanity enough to poison a lord, was tendered to us for our subscription for the prisoners—such being the charitable custom of the mob, in favour of one of their order brought to condign punishment.

After we had "taken out twopence and given them" to the hat-bearer, we were suffered to proceed. But on arriving within view of the twain, there was something so revolting in the dare-devil look of the one,—something so touching in the humbled despondency of the other,—that I was fain to retreat.—I could as soon have looked upon the mangled back of an English soldier writhing under the lash, as upon the meek offender!—

"What was the younger soldier's fault?"—said I, having contrived to make my way to the iron railing of the column, so as to accost that man of renown,—that Malvolio in a worsted epaulet, — Corporal Diakon, *alias* the "*Capitaine de la Colonne*," — the non-commissioned officer invested by government with the charge of the column.

"*Un délit plusque que capital!*—a breach of military discipline," growled the stanch soldier (with whom, *Deo volente*, I mean to make the British public better acquainted).

"Desertion?" — persisted I, remembering the penalty entailed in England by this heinous transgression.

But even Corporal Diakon's sonorous voice was

at that moment rendered inaudible by a piercing shriek from some woman attempting to press her way through the crowd towards the prisoners, ere they were marched off to prison.

"Let me pass,—let me pass,—or I may never see his face again!"—cried the poor old woman, my recent neighbour, apparently roused from her depression to attempt some desperate effort; and still drenched with the water which kind but officious Samaritans had showered on her young companion, as she lay insensible.—"Let me pass, if you have the hearts of Christians!"

The pitying throng ceded to her struggles, and made way for her to approach the prisoner. But, alas! the file of soldiers with their loaded muskets were stationed there expressly to prevent all intercourse between the criminals and the crowd.

"Only one word with Victor,—*only* one!" gasped the agonized old creature, still pressing onwards.

"'Tis the mother of the young girl who has fainted,—the *bonne amie*, no doubt, of one of the prisoners,"—murmured the *gamins* who stood near me.

"At least let me look upon his face!"—faltered the woman, wringing her hands.

"*Arrière!*" was all the answer of the soldiers, stiff as ramrods, and strengthened in stanchness of subordination by witnessing the solemnity of the morning.

"Victor, Victor!"—screamed the despairing woman, on finding herself thus repulsed; while murmurs of "Shame, shame!" began to arise among the ragged regiment of *gamins*.

Just then, I caught sight of the face of the two prisoners, whom the lower stature of the poor woman excluded from her view; and there was no difficulty in deciding to which of them her visit was addressed. Her voice, her piteous exclamations, had reached their ears; and the face of the grey man was instantly overspread by a vivid flush, which as quickly gave place to ashy paleness. From the moment his comrades had marched past as if bidding him adieu for ever, he had fallen into a sort of sullen stupor. But *now* big tears gathered anew under his eyelids.

"Speak—speak,—you who are near to him!" she cried, distractedly addressing a few, who, like myself, seemed to overtop the heads of the soldiers.

"Tell him that his mother and sister have struggled up from Auvergne to see him. Tell him she is innocent—tell him Manon is innocent!—Say, that while he was incurring this dreadful sentence, by absenting himself without leave from his regiment to seek after his sister at the Count's château, she was safe with her father at Riom.—She is ill—very ill!—Bid him send her his forgiveness. Say that his old mother pledges her soul for the innocence of her poor calumniated girl!—O sirs! speak to Victor!—See! they are marching off, and he has not heard me!—He will never know the truth.—They are bearing him to prison, and he will be tormented night and day by the thoughts of his sister's shame.—Will no one follow him?—Will no one speak to him?—Will no one —*no one*—pity me and help me?"

"*Par ici, ma bonne!*—Come back to the young woman!"—panted a breathless *gamin*, plucking her by the sleeve.

"Quick, quick!—the girl is dying!" shouted a second, dragging her along.

"Let the poor soul alone," interposed a third, in a lower voice; "I tell you it is too late. She is dead."—

At that moment, the gay military band, breathing the strain of the "Cachucha" with all its brass, wheeled lightsomely past!—

"And you told me that my sensibility had nothing to fear in witnessing this accursed scene!" sighed, or rather sobbed, my cousin Peter, after we had assisted to guard the body of the soldier's sister from the trampling of the throng, until the arrival of the *commissaire de police* to draw out his *procès verbal.* "I vow I would not have to go through the spectacle of that old peasant woman's despair again, to be made a fellow of the Royal Society!"—

"You must not suppose such things of frequent occurrence here," said I,—scarcely able to articulate.

"I wonder," said Peter, stopping short, "whether any one was considerate enough to inform the poor lad that his sister was lying dead in the Place, and his mother half distracted by her side?"—

"Let us hope not!"—replied I, with a heavy sigh. "The young soldier has had misery enough for to-day, in undergoing his sentence. I am even satisfied with my own portion, as a spectator of the course of MILITARY DISCIPLINE!"

A LUCKY DOG.

BY "THE OLD BACHELOR IN PARIS."

My friend Leonard D'Egoville is one of the happiest rascals of my acquaintance; but there is a provoking self-satisfaction in the fellow's looks, which is apt to put the rest of the world out of humour with his prosperity. D'Egoville is always triumphant, ever exulting;—overpowering one with his selfish sense of enjoyment, and perpetual demands on one's admission of inferiority. Why not, for instance, allow me to eat my mutton cutlet in peace, without informing me that yesterday *he* dined on *chevreuil?*—Why not let me enjoy my humble dish of larks, without boasting, with a punch in the ribs, that last night *he* supped on *bec-*

caficos?—For my part, I can contentedly swallow my paltry pint of *Pouilly* under the acacia trees of the "*Vendanges de Bourgogne*," without insulting the *porteur d'eau* I see making wry faces at the nearest *guinguette* over his *vin de Surêne*, by enlarging upon its delicate flavour; and, methinks, I have a right to expect similar forbearance on the part of the chucking M. D'Egoville, when he comes parading to me about *his* iced *St Péray* or choice *Sauterne*. I am not more envious than my neighbours; yet I swear there are moments when it would be a relief to me to see my friend Leonard receive a box on the ear, in retribution of his exultations.

For several years past, D'Egoville has been in the enjoyment of a capital bachelor's apartment on the Boulevard des Capucines, and a charming villa at Montmorency; and I admit that he would be an ungrateful dog were he not to thank Heaven, morning, evening, and at odd times between, for this auspicious ordering of his destinies.

But he has no right to tantalize a poor wretch like myself, by bragging of the coolness of his cellars, the marrow-like softness of his

sofa-cushions, the richness of his furniture, or the smoothness of his *parquets*.

"This is a cheering sight," said I, on meeting him the other day at the exhibition of the arts and manufactures of France, now open in the Champs Elysées, "a most gratifying thing for Louis Philippe and the French nation, to perceive how vast a progress has been made during the last five years in the texture of their cloths, the growth of their wool, and the temper of their cutlery. The jury will find it a difficult task, I conceive, to award their medals and prizes among so many meritorious competitors."

"What the devil do *I* care for the jury, its medals or prizes!"—exclaimed D'Egoville, with a self-complacent laugh. "*I* come here, my dear fellow, solely on my own errand. Happening to look yesterday at my banker's book, and to find the balance, as usual, on the right side, I instantly drew a checque for a few thousand francs, with the view of adding more comforts to my bachelor's hall yonder, at Montmorency. For a man who has a little money to throw away, this place is really a resource!—One sees all the new inventions, all the last improvements, without the bore

of driving from shop to shop, to be solicited to death; and after all, perhaps flummeried into the purchase of a service of plate or a boot-jack of last year's fashion.—Look at this magnificent stained crystal from Alsace!—I have just ordered myself a most exquisite little *cabaret* for my *eau sucrée*, white embossed with garnet colour, for two hundred francs.—I should have paid half as much again for some *rococo* machine or other of the same kind, had I contented myself with a glance at the Palais Royal.—Again, yonder magnificent carpet of Sallandrouze's with the peacock waving his gorgeous tail as a centre-piece,—I have bought it for my drawing-room for two thousand francs, instead of closing for the quizzical Aubusson for which I was bargaining with my upholsterer;—I am now on my road to the next gallery, to settle about some carved ebony consoles.—I can't make up my mind exactly which I like best—those with or without the ivory inlaying."—

"The difference of price between the two must be considerable," I inadvertently observed.

"Ay, ay—*that* is the point always uppermost in the thoughts of some people. Luckily,

a thousand or two of francs more or less in the cost, signifies very little to *me!* All I have to consider is, which kind will harmonise best with the new Venetian hangings which Lesage is putting up in my saloon. And by the way, what think you of those mechanical beds yonder, with their reading-desk, lamp-stand, and table-service, appearing and disappearing by the touch of a spring? I have some thoughts of getting one against my first fit of the gout.—Even in this hot weather it is pleasant enough to be waited upon, without being offended by the sight of one's footmen's shining faces."

"Certainly, certainly," said I, striving to get away, and follow my own devices in the examination of the curious works of art and science abounding in the gallery.

"Why, where the deuce are you hurrying?" cried Leonard D'Egoville; "what can *you* want here?"—he continued, with a supercilious glance from my seedy coat to one of Aucoq's gorgeous dressing-cases of embossed gold.

"Not much, indeed!"—replied I, forcing a laugh. "But there is some consolation in exam-

ining and philosophising upon yonder anatomical model of an unsophisticated man with its demonstration of veins and arteries, proving all the sons of Adam to be condemned to the same organization;—in contradistinction to the various displays of finery, lace, embroidery, and brocade, which furnish the worldly distinction between my lord and his valet,—between the Crœsus and the beggar!"

My irony was thrown away.

"Brocade?—embroidery?" cried D'Egoville, catching at the only sounds comprehensible to him in my harangue; "where the devil are they?—I have seen only those devoted to the service of the altar, which are being bought up in waggon-loads for the new churches. There is nothing worth speaking of in the way of embroidery that *I* am aware of."

"Not even the exquisite court-train and cushion marked with the initials of the young Queen of England?" cried I, with indignation.

"As I told you before, I am in search only of objects applicable to my own use. What are court-trains to *me?* But, by the way," continued Leonard (pointing to a stall we were passing, co-

vered with toupets and perruques, of every size, shape, sort, and shade, betwixt black, chinchilli, and hoary silver,—the full-bottom and the astucious *tour de tête*), "even *you* might surely find things here adapted to your wants and pocket.—See, my poor friend!—cauls of very decent aspect for your bald crown, at ten francs a-piece!—And look beyond,—superb *rateliers* of teeth for three louis a-set, or half-a-crown by the single grinder!—Ears, too, in gold, silver, or caoutchouc, permanent or temporary, with acoustic tubes, affixable at pleasure. And, as I live, glass eyes of every hue, from sparkling black to sentimental blue. But you enjoy, I fancy, the use of both your eyes, eh?—your imperfect vision is merely the result of your time of life?—Well—no need to despair! Here is an optician who promises that, by the use of a pair of five-franc spectacles, you shall be able to read diamond editions by candle-light."

"There are also yonder crutches for the lame, iron bandages for the deformed, and even strait-waistcoats for the insane," cried I, enraged beyond my patience by his insolent egotism. "But I flatter myself I stand in need of neither; and

am thankful to Heaven that I am able to admire the progress of human ingenuity, without reference to my personal wants or deficiencies."

"Why, by Jupiter, I do believe you are affronted!" cried D'Egoville. "My dear fellow, ten million of pardons! Perhaps I am a little too apt to overlook the raws and sores of other people! Yet I have certainly no reason to disparage those arising from—from a deficiency in the financial department," said he, afraid of again offending me. "Only a few years ago, I used to come here myself with wistful eyes and watering mouth, like the chimney-sweepers who thaw their noses in hard weather against the panes of the pastry-cook's shops. I did not then dare so much as lift my ambition to a cane and tassel, by way of equipage;—*I* who, this very season, have launched a couple of carriages and a *fourgon!*"

I was amazed.—Though the bragging propensities of Leonard D'Egoville ought to have forewarned me of the *parvenu*, his hardness of heart had caused me to set him down in my mind as one born and nurtured in the sunshine of prosperity. So little had he learned mercy, that I could not conceive he had ever suffered persecution.

"You look surprised," cried he, detecting my amazement. "Did I never confide to you the strange origin of my fortune?—Let me see—when we first made our acquaintance crossing St Bernard, four years ago—"

"You were, as now, in the enjoyment of wealth and independence," said I. "During the illness following the accident which then befel me,—*me*, a poor wayfarer,—you were lavish in your offers of assistance—"

"Pooh, pooh!—I have heard enough of that—it was not of that we were talking,"—cried D'Egoville. "I was telling you, or wanting to tell you, how, from a poor devil in arrears for the rent of his fusty lodging in the Quartier Latin, I achieved my present position. The story is a long one, and would do me little honour in the ears of the idlers of the Exposition, should it chance to be overheard. Come down, therefore, with me to Montmorency,—my Pelham is at the door,—come down with me, I say, to Montmorency, and dine and sleep; and you shall have the narrative of my chequered life, including a description of the memorable temple of Esculapius,

—*l'hôpital des chiens*,—which was the making of me."

"You kept a dog-hospital!" cried I, inexpressibly astonished.

"Not exactly," replied Leonard, more diverted, however, than indignant at the accusation. "Trust me, I had not wherewithal to entertain any establishment half so costly. But I see that your curiosity is excited.—Let us be going. I dine at six precisely,—ay, *precisely*, even to a friend."

"I am sorry I cannot accept your obliging invitation," said I, drawing up. "Although I lodge in a *cinquième*, and the meal awaiting me is only my daily *soupe* and *bouilli*, the good woman who prepares it would be apt in her anxiety to go and interrogate the police, should her methodical master commit so strange a breach of routine as to tarry from home for board and bed, without having duly apprized her."

"Stuff and nonsense!—We will take the Rue Miromenil in our way out of town, instead of crossing through Les Thermes; and you may at once apprize your Megara, and snatch up a change of linen, in case you are tempted to

remain with me to morrow," cried D'Egoville. "Come, come!—we must not lose our time. A good *entrée* waits for no man; and our *filets de caneton* will be spoiled, if you stand hem-ing and ha-ing thus."

Though I did my utmost to evade the engagement, between threats, promises, and cajolements, Monsieur D'Egoville took such forcible possession of my mind and body, that we had reached St Ouen before I was half reconciled to my inconsistency of purpose.

"How full of historical reminiscences are all the environs of Paris!"—cried D'Egoville, with a sentimental air, as we drove within view of the aristocratic parks of St Ouen; "betwixt the great De Staël, Du Cayla, and Ternaux of Merino-sheep renown,—how many illustrious names connect themselves with the history of St Ouen! But I forget—I have promised to talk to you of a person less illustrious—of my obscure self."

And as he spoke, he began to caress his crossed leg with an air of complacency, implying that, in his own estimation, Charlemagne was a foot-boy to him!—

"I have a tale to tell which, as my coachman

has no more ear for Christian discourse than one of the brutes he is driving, can never be more safely adventured than here on the Citizen King's highway," he resumed. "In the first place, know that, high as I have ascended in the scale of society, your humble servant was born in the confined sphere of a porter's lodge. The *cordon*, my natural inheritance, was neither that of the St Esprit nor the Golden Fleece; but simply that cord by which my tender mother let in and out the visitors to an obscure house in the Rue Vendôme. Ay—shrug your shoulders!—gay and brilliant as you behold me, I am actually a native of that most humdrum quarter of Paris—the Marais! Superior to, or perhaps only ashamed of, her humble vocation, my mother announced herself to me, as I grew to boy's estate, as the widow of a captain of the *grande armée;* in witness whereof, she kept among the edibles in her corner cupboard an old ribbon of the Legion of Honour, and a bottle of Eau de Cologne cast in the effigy of Napoleon,—incontestable evidence of my parentage, to which I did due homage every time I paid my devoirs to her Gruyère cheese. I have my doubts whether the lodgers of the old den to

which her services were attached were equally respectful; for I remember that my venerable parent was apt to treat them (behind their backs) with sovereign contempt; from the retired clock-maker, whose family occupied the first floor, to the *employés* in the *marché aux vieux linges*, who lodged on the *sixième*. Of the horde who dealt out their five-franc pieces to her on New Year's Day, and their discontents, the remaining three hundred and sixty-four, there was only one whom Madame Goville—"

"Goville?"—I indiscreetly reiterated.

"Ay, my good sir. Since I have consented to deliver my round unvarnished tale, I may as well admit that only the two latter syllables of my name are derived from the ghost of the captain of the *grande armée*, or from his *soi-disant* widow. To resume,—where you so unnecessarily suspended my story,—there was only one among the lodgers especially recommended by my mother to my assiduity and forbearance.

"'Be sure,' she used to say, as she sat with her Roman nose crooked into the stocking she was mending (for, in spite of the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, Madame Goville stooped to follow the

calling of a *ravaudeuse*), 'be sure, Leonard, never to pass on the stairs or in the entry without a salutation, either Mademoiselle Brigitte, the maiden lady on the second floor, or *la mère* Pinson, her woman of all-work. Of all the abiders in this dog-hole of a house, *they*, my dear son, are to be respected. So little trouble as they give, and such handsome vails!—two three-livre crowns on the first of January, and another on Mademoiselle's fête-day;—and yet in bed every night of the blessed year by eight o'clock, and not a single visitor from one year's end to another, either to mistress or maid, to take the needle out of my hand, or give me the trouble of saying "At home," or "Not at home!"

"'To be sure, there is the nuisance of opening the gate three times a day for her beast of a poodle when *la mère* Pinson brings him down to the street; to say nothing of my anxieties in keeping the peace betwixt Mademoiselle Brigitte and Madame Alain, the old lady on the first floor, who swears that her mignionette and nasturtiums are ruined by the noisy beast of a cockatoo that hangs out of ma'amselle's window.'

"'Say what you will against ma'amselle's

cockatoo, mother,' cried I, 'but not a word against poor Mouton!—Mouton is the cleverest dog and the best creature in the world.'

"'Ay, ay,—as troublesome and mischievous as thyself,' was the rejoinder of the captain's widow. 'But no matter; leave the poodle to itself, Nanard, and the poodle will leave *thee*. But whatever thou dost, be sure never to lose an opportunity of obliging or serving Mademoiselle Brigitte or her maid. I have heard it whispered by a little bird who never sings false, that mademoiselle (who has not a relation upon earth) is inscribed in the bank of France as owner of twice as large an amount as the richest proprietor in the Rue de Vendôme!'

"You will admit that Madame Goville, good woman, took a stupid way of interesting the feelings of a child?—The bank of France was a mystery beyond my powers of development; and it was chiefly as the mistress of Mouton that I felt inclined to love, honour, or obey Mademoiselle Brigitte Duval. For Mouton was the joy of my days, the dream of my nights.—A huge, woolly, rusty-coated poodle, unanimously kicked and cuffed by its mistress's fellow-lodgers when-

ever occasion offered,—the poor beast bestowed upon myself, his solitary friend, the rich treasure of his affections. Harassed out of his life by the exaction of the two old women, to whom his antics afforded the sole diversion of their unincidental life, Mouton was only too rejoiced to escape from the stifling atmosphere of Mademoiselle Brigitte's apartment to frolic with me in the narrow court-yard; or, when opportunity favoured our escape, to play truant with me for a course among the chesnut-trees of the Place Royale. Right happy were we, Mouton and I, when we could fly together;—ay, even at the risk of a good beating a-piece on our return, from those in authority over us.

"All my regard for Mouton, however, did not prevent my perpetually incurring the displeasure of his mistress. A spell seemed set upon my endeavours to recommend myself to Mademoiselle Brigitte Duval's favour. I it was who admitted into the house the identical brindled cat by which the hopes of her first brood of canaries were demolished. The cherry-stone over which *la mère* Pinson's luckless foot slipped one summer morning, thereby originating a fracture which might

have cost her her life, and *did* cost her lady a fortune in doctor's bills, was traced to a pound of *bigarreaux* which I had purchased and devoured on the staircase, by way of giving a lesson to Mouton in fetching and carrying with the stones.—In short, whatever evil chanced to the lady or the lady's maid, Leonard Goville was sure to be at the bottom of it;—luckily enough for me—for to insure my absence six days out of seven, Mademoiselle Brigitte finally consented to unclose her purse-strings to pay for my schooling. But for my indefatigability in parading poor Mouton on the landing-place every morning, with his mistress's purloined parasol for a musket, to go through his manual exercise, I might have remained guiltless of the common rudiments of learning.

"I was almost repaid for the afflictions of exile from my illiterate home by the howl of rapture wherewith Mouton used to greet me every Sunday, the moment my well-known step was heard on the stairs. Mademoiselle Brigitte grumbled, indeed, that even this Sabbatical release from the labours of learning should be conceded to me. But on that point I was firm; swearing that, unless

allowed to return home on Sundays, to pay my respects to my beloved parent and beloved poodle, I would not go to school at all.

"Three years had I been toiling through the labyrinth of letters, and the clumsy booby of ten was stretching into the lanky youth of thirteen; when my domestic happiness was overcast by perceiving that my faithful friend no longer enjoyed the blessings of vigorous health. In proportion as my frame became elongated, that of the pampered poodle grew globose; and, instead of the saltatorial salutations wherewith he was wont to denote his joy at my weekly arrival, he began to find some difficulty in wheezing his way to the head of the staircase to do me honour. It could not be old age; for Mouton, when introduced into my mother's lodge five years before in the apron of Madame Pinson, was a mere puppy —round, white, helpless, and featureless, as if rolled out of a filbert-nut. So sudden a progress of decay must clearly arise from inward disease; and tears burst on more than one occasion from my eyes, on learning that Mouton was given over by the faculty as under the influence of a confirmed liver-complaint! It was a

tender subject to Mademoiselle Brigitte!—She, who had witnessed without a pang the extinction of her numerous family, could not summon courage to contemplate the day when Mouton was to be removed from her.

"'They have fed the poor dog to death, and there's an end of it,' was the reply of Captain Goville's widow, when I appealed to her sympathy.

"'No, no,—not an end of it!'—cried I. 'Something might surely be done. Abounding as this great metropolis does in scientific practitioners, Mouton might yet be saved. Yes, mother,—yes, madam,—Mouton might yet be saved.'—

"'I shouldn't care a pinch of snuff if he were strung up to yonder clothes'-line!'—was the hard-hearted rejoinder of Madame Goville. 'But true it is that the grand dog-doctor, who came last week all the way from the Champs Elysées in his own carriage for a consultation, swore that the dog had a dozen years' life in him, if his mistress would only consent to put him upon a regiment.'

"'Into a regiment?' said I, somewhat astonished.

"'No, child! To starve him till the bones come through his skin. That's what the faculty call putting upon a regiment. Yet, for all I can argue, or the doctor devise, Mademoiselle persists in killing him with kindness.—The last gentleman who attended him, from the famous *Hôpital des Chiens* in the Rue de Clichy, swore that if they went on *stuffing* the poor beast, Mouton hadn't a month to live; and then,' continued my mother, with a grim smile, 'if they like they may stuff him for good and all.'

"She ought not to have jested,—for the tears were coursing each other down her son's innocent nose. Escaping from her presence, I hurried to the Rue de Clichy. I resolved to know the worst. I chose to see the Dupuytren of the canine race, and learn the fate of Mouton from scientific lips.

"Did you ever happen to notice in your wanderings," continued D'Egoville, turning abruptly towards me, "just opposite to the gates of the Tivoli Gardens, and perfumed by the fragrant atmosphere of its lilacs and roses, an elegant architectural-looking edifice, the door of which is surmounted by the effigy of a dog? That airy

structure is the *Hôpital des Chiens*,—I say, 'the' *par excellence*, to distinguish it from the numerous dog-hospitals which drain the purses of the dowagers of Paris. After a timid ring at the bell, I was admitted into the *bureau* of the establishment; a handsome room, furnished with illustrated editions of the best physiological authorities, and a desk, on which lay the day-book and ledgers of the hospital. It had not struck eleven; till which hour I knew that Dr Mirabeau received patients, previous to setting forth in his carriage for his daily consultations.

"I had not yet ventured to take a seat, when the doctor appeared, — a smug, smiling, grey-headed gentleman, habited in professional black, and wearing diamond studs in his shirt, and at his button-hole the riband of the national order. He entered, rubbing his hands with the self-gratulating air peculiar to his obnoxious species.

"In a few words I explained my errand.

"'Let me see!'—said he, taking from his pocket a richly gilt morocco pocket-book, containing notes of his consultations. 'Last week, you say;—a grey poodle, in the Rue de Vendôme?—Exactly.—Here we have him!—"Mouton, aged

five years and three months, the property of Mademoiselle Brigitte Duval." A very serious case, sir,' he continued, shaking his head. 'Complete derangement of the epigastric region, hepatic inflammations, irregular action of the pulse, —altogether an important complication.—Nevertheless, I have hope. Removed from the disadvantages under which he at present labours, my patient might still live to be a delight to the Duval family. But it is one of the misfortunes, sir, which beset the gentlemen of my profession, that our best endeavours are counteracted by the injudicious indulgence of the ladies and gentlemen to whom we look for the reward of our labours. If the individual in question, for instance, were to be only one month an inmate of my establishment, I would answer for restoring him to perfect health.'

"With a heavy sigh (for I was painfully aware that, sooner than part with poor Mouton, even for a day, Mademoiselle Brigitte would resign her right hand), I now put into Monsieur Mirabeau's hand the two-franc piece, which I understood to be his fee, and received, in return, a low bow, and the tariff of his establishment.

"'Monsieur would perhaps like to inspect the hospital?' said he, accompanying me forth; and, on my eager assent, he conducted me across a yard sanded with scrupulous neatness, and adorned with orange-trees and other flowering shrubs, to an airy building, divided into several wards; one partitioned into kennels, others having commodious beds, while a third consisted in rows of perches and cages, as an infirmary for birds. All the patients with which they were filled, both bipeds and quadrupeds, bestowed on my conductor most affectionate greetings, which were requited by Monsieur Mirabeau with an air of tender affability, such as may have been assumed by Bonaparte in visiting the lazaretto of Jaffa; or by Louis Philippe, when parading the Hotel Dieu, after the revolution of July. From the asthmatic pug, panting on its straw, to the opera dancer's delicate Italian greyhound, about to be *in* the the straw, all present turned their eyes gratefully on the benefactor of their race.

"'They love me, poor little animals!' said Monsieur le Docteur, with a magnanimous glance along the ward. 'One of my most exquisite

rewards is the gratitude of the little beings committed to my care.'

"As we re-crossed the yard he was accosted by a mincing *grisette*, elegantly attired, with inquiries after the health of '*cette pauvre Zéphyrine.*'

"'*Zéphyrine?*'—reiterated the doctor, in an inquiring tone.

"'The *griffon* of Madame la Baronne de Montgelas.'

"'Allow me to consult my registers,' replied the Monsieur Mirabeau, hurrying into his sanctum, while I waited with the waiting-maid at the door, and saw him, spectacles on nose, examine his books of entry.

"'DEAD!' was the result of the investigation; a monosyllable that called forth a torrent of ejaculation from the *soubrette*. Monsieur Mirabeau proceeded to read aloud,—'Zéphyrine, a white *griffon*, introduced into the establishment on the 13th of May; died on the 27th. *Oui, mademoiselle!* On Wednesday last, my little patient breathed her last. According to custom, I performed the autopsy of the body. The disease proved to be inflammation of the brain, precisely

as I hinted to Madame la Baronne, on first pointing out to her that the fits of her *griffon* were of an epileptic nature.'

"Leaving the doctor and the lady to discuss the diseases of Zéphyrine together, I hastened to reflect upon the doom of a being more interesting to my affections. But already my determination was taken.

"That evening, my dear sir, Mouton disappeared from the Rue de Vendôme. I leave you to guess the astonishment, anguish, and surmises produced by this inexplicable disparition. Though incapable, by reason of his malady, of descending the staircase, he was gone; either the victim of malice, or the prey of cupidity,—either assassinated by a fellow-lodger, or stolen for the sake of his skin. A handsome reward was instantly offered for his recovery, and the walls of the Marais were covered with handbills. In vain!

"I leave you to guess the indignant agonies of Mademoiselle Brigitte and her maid, more especially as every soul in the house evinced unequivocal symptoms of satisfaction. Three whole weeks did they pass in tears—three whole weeks

did Madame Pinson, according to her own account, remain utterly sleepless. The two disconsolate women were accustomed to sit in the dusk every evening, recounting to each other's sympathy the feats and accomplishments of their lost favourite, now probably numbered with the dead. When, lo! at the close of the fourth week, Mademoiselle Brigitte was startled out of her sleep one Sunday morning by an unwonted scratching at her door, and, on unclosing it, in bounded a handsome healthy quadruped, faintly resembling the idol of other times. The well-combed coat and shapely form of the new comer bore, however, little affinity to the wheezing lump which in latter days had answered to the name of Mouton; and when, at the ejaculation of that once-loved name, the intruder raised himself on his hinder legs, and, advancing towards Ma'amselle Brigitte's head, performed a succession of well-remembered feats of agility, the astonished old lady began to fancy that the grave had yielded up its dead. 'Mouton!' cried she again; and laying its now gelid muzzle to her beloved hand, the faithful beast licked it in a paroxysm of ten-

derness.—'Yes, it *was* her Mouton; her own—her only, restored to health, beauty, youth, and happiness!'—

"But, by what extraordinary interposition was the miracle accomplished?—None could say! The delighted mistress and maid were forced to content themselves with the belief that supernatural aid had been vouchsafed to restore their darling — a new Eurydice—to their affections.

"It was not till when, on the following winter, I received something nearly approaching to a thrashing from Madame Goville on the discovery that my warm great coat had disappeared as unaccountably as poor Mouton, by way of defence, I ventured to place in her hand the card of the

'HOPITAL POUR LES CHIENS,

Chats, Oiseaux, et autres Animaux, tenu par M. le Docteur Mirabeau, qui prend aussi des pensionnaires.

PRIX.

1 Consultation . .	2 fr.	1 Coupe d'Oreilles .	2 fr.
1 Visite	3 „	1 Idem de queue . .	1 „
1 Saignée	3 „	1 Autopsie	3 „
1 Posée de sangsues	3 „		

Pour les fractures et autres opérations, on traite de convenance, &c. &c.'

having on the reverse a lithographic vignette, representing the Dog-Hospital.

"'I see how it is!' cried Madame Goville, after casting her eyes over an annexed bill, amounting to forty-three francs ten sous, for a month's board of a sick poodle, bran-baths, sea-weed poultices, drugs, and other remedies, supplied for the same. 'Unprincipled little wretch! You actually disposed of your warm *paletot* in order to insure the restoration of that beast of a dog.—Just as you please!—But *I* will take care that you have never another great coat to your back till you have earned one by your own exertions.'

"'He *has* earned one!' was Mademoiselle Brigitte's exclamation when the secret transpired, and reached her ears. 'And, so long as Leonard lives, he shall never want a warm coat to his back.'

"Such, my dear sir (for here we are within view of my gate), such was the trivial cause which determined the old lady to give me the education of a gentleman. Three years afterwards, on the opening of her last will and testament, it was discovered that Mademoiselle Brigitte

had left me her universal legatee. The ill-natured world persists in believing me to be her son. But it is no such thing. Like other great men, I am *le fils de mes œuvres;* and my *chef d'œuvre* was my preservation of the life of poor Mouton, by kidnapping him to L'HOPITAL DES CHIENS."

THE FATAL WINDOW.

BY "THE OLD BACHELOR IN PARIS."

We crack-brained saunterers through life, whose brains are stuffed to overflowing with odd shreds and patches of tradition, are apt to affix a value to circumstances of locality, trifles of no account in the eyes of sober-minded men, and wholly overlooked by the ordinary observer. Till within the last few months, there existed in the Place Vendôme, marring the uniformity of its presentment, a single window, whose narrow panes and old-fashioned framing afforded a remarkable contrast to the noble plate-glass so much better proportioned to the majestic architecture of the place, which filled the windows of the neighbouring houses. Though the chamber to which it

admitted light was situated on the first floor, or *étage d'honneur*, of one of the finest hotels of the square, it had evidently remained untouched from the period of its construction; when even the palaces of the first kingdom of Europe betrayed, in the inadequate quality and size of their window-panes, the imperfect progress of one of the most ancient and beautiful of the arts of invention.

Every other drawing-room of the Place Vendôme was adorned with capacious *carreaux*, so transparent as to deceive the eye into doubts of any intervening medium between the cozy warmth within and the chilly atmosphere without. Yet in that one window (the fatal window, as it was designated by all the old people of the neighbourhood), there remained the small, green, veiny squares, through which the financier, Law, used to gaze upon the gathering of the multitude below, who first thronged thither to purchase his worthless paper; and finally, with the hope of tearing to pieces the arch-impostor by whom that scheme of financial knavery was devised for the ruin of thousands.

It was not, however, during John Law's occupancy of the hotel in question that the event took

place, which was the cause of affixing to the window in question so startling a designation.

The sale of the adventurer's goods and chattels, consequent upon the breaking of the bubble, had placed the noble mansion in the hands of one of the most opulent of that unpopular tribe, the *Fermiers Généraux* of the kingdom. Monsieur de Raynolle (whose financial exertions were, not to speak it profanely, strictly within the letter of the law) was a man who regarded with horror the dealings of his predecessors as irregularities, innovations, inbreaks into the routine of financial credit. He considered the post he had purchased as the means of honestly turning his capital to account. It had pleased Heaven to make him rich; it pleased himself to make himself richer. Like the greater number of his confraternity, he did not slumber upon his opulence, but enjoyed an all but regal share of the luxuries and transports of life; purchasing at the highest cost, not only the *chef d'œuvres* of art or science, but the society of the most eminent among the wits, poets, philosophers, statesmen, and beauties of his time. For such things *are* purchasable; not, as the bargain-drivers say, from hand to hand, but

by splendid banquets, brilliant entertainments, and all the garlands and frippery suspended by the hand of luxury over the wooden frame-work of life!

The Duc de Choiseul and the Comte de Lauraguais, the profligate Richelieu and the brilliant Soubise, were frequent guests of Monsieur Raynolle, both in his Place Vendôme Hotel, and at his splendid château de Draveil. Nay, even St Lambert and Marmontel, the Abbe Voisenon, and Baron Grimm, crowded eagerly to his *petits soupers.* Nothing could be more *recherché* than the fare; nothing more fashionable than the society assembled. It was impossible to outrage moral feeling, or laugh at the notion of a Providence, with a better grace than did the guests of Monsieur Raynolle, the *Fermier Général!* One might have fancied that this buyer-up of the good and beautiful things of this world, had also contracted with the great Disposer of events for impunity from judgment to come!—

And yet the reckless libertine had a wife,—young, beautiful, brilliant, shrewd,—in name, if not in nature, an Englishwoman.

In the course of his mercantile dealings, some ten years before, Raynolle had become acquainted with a man named Darley; the poor, but honest cashier of a house of business, having intimate connections with the English market; and Raynolle, on discovering that the daughter (for whom, in addition to a couple of grown-up sons, the indigent clerk was indebted to his marriage with a portionless Frenchwoman, of indifferent reputation) was young and beautiful beyond even the renowned beauties whom he was bold enough to consider his own, made no doubt of attaching her name to the catalogue of his household property. Neither Hester Darley nor her mother seemed, indeed, to oppose much obstacle to the supposition. His costly gifts were so well received, his tedious visits were so obsequiously welcomed during the absence of the poor cashier on his daily duties, that Raynolle was almost pardonable in believing that the time was not far distant when further visits would become superfluous. — In this insolent surmise, he was strengthened by the discovery that Hester's elder brother, John Darley, had formed a clandestine marriage, almost as imprudent as his father's, and

that extreme misery might be expected to silence *his* opposition to the disgrace of his sister.

Of the younger brother, Gerard, the *Fermier Général* knew nothing, for he was with the army in Flanders—a soldier of fortune; nor was it till the very eve of the day which Raynolle had marked for the *enlèvement* of Hester Darley, that the sudden arrival of the impetuous young man, to whom some considerate neighbour had despatched tidings of what was passing in his father's house, threw the projects of the *Fermier Général* into confusion.

"I am neither a brawler nor a bully," said Gerard Darley, on finding Raynolle, as he had been taught to expect, established as master of the house during his father's absence, "and the airs of grandeur you would assume with me, *Monsieur le richard*, are wholly thrown away. I fear neither the canes of your footmen nor the staves of the *huissiers*, with whose aid you are accustomed to make war upon your debtors. Only this I tell you, without rancour or malice,—that you leav this house as the affianced husband of my sister, or you leave it not alive. Hester is your equal, sir, —for *you* possess riches and consideration, *she*

youth and beauty; and, in point of family, both alike are sprung from the people. But even did there exist a disparity of condition, you should have thought of it before your visits here brought disgrace on an honest family!"

Madame Darley and her daughter listened in consternation to this arrogant address, not conceiving that the unsupported menaces of a youth of Gerard's age could be productive of any other result than that of incensing against them the munificent patron to whom they had so many obligations; and Hester grew pale with rage at the idea of any interruption to an intimacy which had been the means of affording such luxurious indulgences to her vanity, and rendering her an object of envy to their less fortunate neighbours. But her vexation was soon converted into hope of a more favourable issue, on discerning the weakness and terror of poor Raynolle, when he found himself yet more vigorously pressed by the reckless young sergeant of dragoons. With features contracted by rage, he finally yielded to the imperious demands of Gerard Darley. A notary was sent for; a legal signature secured; and when Raynolle, according to his previous intention,

bore the beautiful Hester from her obscure home, it was as his lawful wife! Only one stipulation did the wily financier make on the occasion,—that not a syllable should be suffered to transpire of the mode in which the marriage had been achieved; while his sole act of vengeance upon those of whom he conceived himself the dupe, consisted in a decree that not one of the Darley family should ever set foot within his gates.

Meanwhile, the admiration excited in society by the charms of the new beauty (as Madame Raynolle was universally denominated by the gallants of the court), almost reconciled her vain-glorious husband to a connection into which he had been forced at the point of the sword. Of her origin nothing was known; and the financier having been artful enough to make a hurried journey to London previous to placing his beautiful bride at the head of his establishment, Madame Raynolle passed among her husband's friends as a *belle milady*, whom he had brought back with him from the chartered fatherland of fine horses and fine women.

Who now so worshipped as the charming wife of the millionary *Fermier Général*?—Her portrait

was on the easel of every artist; her name imparted distinction to every fashionable invention. To the indignation of Madame de Pompadour, ribbons were tied up into bows *à la* Raynolle; chickens stewed *à la* Raynolle; *pralines* crisped *à la* Raynolle; carriages painted in garlands *à la* Raynolle; every thing worn, tasted, or displayed at that moment in Paris, was named in honour of the divinity in whose hair flashed a coronet of diamonds surpassing even that of the Queen; and towards whose box at the opera, the eyes and acclamations of the whole assembly were directed. Voltaire addressed to her, under the name of Néæra, one of his choicest odes; and the prettiest of Marmontel's tales was dedicated to the presiding angel of the Place Vendôme.

The *Fermier Général* was satisfied. *Eclât* was all he coveted in the world; and his handsome young wife excited as much applause as his statues of Daphne and Chloe, by Couston, or the frescos of his dining-room by Boucher. He saw himself an object of envy, and was content. Already, too, he recognised a kindred spirit in the lovely Hester. Vain and ostentatious, her nature was cold and artificial as his own; and he

was indebted to his wife for a thousand cogent suggestions for the advancement of their position in society. The purchase of a princely estate in Languedoc, endowed with privileges of ennoblement, converted them into the Marquis and Marquise de Montméry; the purchase of an office in the royal household entitled them to an *entrée* at court. In consideration of the fair aspirant after the honours of Versailles, Louis XV made no opposition; and though certain of the more stiff-necked of the Queen's ladies were indignant at seeing a mere *bourgeoise* raised to their level, they dared not venture upon any open demonstrations of displeasure. In the *grand monde* of Paris, as in the laws of England, "*le Roi le veut*" rendered the rule absolute.

On the nights when the *fêtes* of the new Marquise de Montméry set the windows of her hotel into a blaze, as vast a crowd was collected in the Place Vendôme as in the tumultuous days of John Law. Many among them had witnessed the triumphs of that unprincipled adventurer.

"At that very window he used to stand, and with fiendish glee survey the poor dupes below, the last livre of whose earnings he was filching!"

they would exclaim, pointing to a window of the first floor, from which now issued a dazzling gleam of light, emitted by the brilliant boudoir of the lovely Marquise. Others, turning from the spot, were heard to whisper, "The place is doomed!—A curse ought to be upon the window from whence John Law numbered his victims!"—

Instead of a curse, however, a blessing seemed to be on all belonging to the Marquis and Marquise de Montméry. As their prodigality increased, their means became doubled. His speculations were uniformly triumphant, till "lucky as Montméry" became a proverb in the money-market of more than one European city. Fifteen years after the marriage (on the origin of which he no longer suffered a reflection to disturb the harmony of his thoughts) the *Fermier Général* was as fast united to his fair Hester by similarity of tastes and pursuits, as he had formerly been by the brilliancy of a complexion, which, sooth to say, was now, like most dazzlingly fair complexions, somewhat on the wane.

The time was now come, indeed, for the Marchioness to experience a similar change in the

colour of her fortunes. One evening, about ten years after her marriage, during the absence of her husband who was inspecting the erection of a splendid conservatory at Draveil, a strange cavalier insisted on forcing his way into her presence with a vehemence not to be withstood by a whole regiment of lacqueys.

"Yes, it is I!"—cried Gerard Darley, flinging down his hat on a table of malachite and gold, on finding himself face to face with his proud sister in her luxurious boudoir. "You are surprised to see me here. You had hoped never to see me again. Ungrateful for the energy of soul and arm which served to place you in the position you now occupy, you despise your obscure brother, who, trust me, Madam, renders back with interest the contempt of the Marquise de Montméry!"

"You must be aware that the prohibitions of my husband——" Madame de Montméry was beginning.

"I have sedulously respected them," replied Gerard, with a bitter sneer. "I did not appeal to your opulence when your parents lay dying in misery and neglect. I did not

appeal to your affection when your wretched brother, distracted by the loss of his young wife, fell by his own hand, leaving two helpless orphans to my protection. I did not appeal to your pity when one of these poor babes, requiring tenderer aid than could be afforded by its soldier uncle, pined away till it rejoined its parents in the grave. I appeal not to it even now, Madam, though one of the only two on earth in whose veins blood kindred with your own is flowing, stands in urgent need of your protection. But I command it, Hester!—I command it in the name of those who gave you life!—I command it in the name of that most high GOD who hath called them to himself.—I command it in the name of the world's opinion, more influential over your mind than either!"—

"What is it you require of me?" faltered the Marchioness, overawed by the resolute sternness of her brother.

"That during my absence in the opening campaign you accord your protection to the orphan daughter of John Darley," replied Gerard. "The camp is not a fit home for a girl of her years

and beauty; and where am I to place her, unless where she has a right to be, in the household of her nearest female relative?"

"It is well," replied Madame de Montméry, coldly. "During your absence my niece shall be duly cared for."

"I had rather the words were uttered in a more womanly tone," remonstrated Gerard; "nevertheless, I accept the pledge. Hester Darley is now fifteen—fair and innocent, as was a former Hester Darley at those tender years. Her birth and breeding, though humble, are equal to those of the Marquise de Montméry. She must not be treated as a slave,—she must not be treated as a menial."—

"She shall be treated as my brother's child," interrupted Hester, eager to bring the interview to a close.

"Nay, more. Unendowed with the means of forming a noble alliance, I will not have her thrust into the dissolute circles that frequent this house. Let her dwell in seclusion till my return, when I shall require at your hands an account of her welfare. You know me—you

are aware that Gerard Darley is not to be trifled with. Let the prosperity of my poor charge allow me nothing to complain of."

However irritated by the arrogance of the trooper's tone, Madame de Montméry felt that the best method to keep peace with him was to subscribe to his conditions; and within an hour, the young girl, as yet a stranger to her, was deposited under her care. That night young Hester Darley slept under the roof of the Marchioness.

The only comfort to the aunt, on beholding the extraordinary beauty of the girl thus peremptorily committed to her charge, was the injunction of Gerard that she should not figure in the gay society of the Hôtel Montméry. Hester Darley, though presenting an extraordinary resemblance to her aunt and namesake, was a thousand times lovelier than the Marchioness, even in her prime. She possessed that transparent fairness rarely seen unless in persons of English descent, enhanced by a glossy elasticity, which sadly put to shame the faded cheeks of her kinswoman, withered by vigils and dissipation.

"This would never do!" murmured Madame de Montméry, as she noted the resplendent beauty

of the timid young girl. "I would not that even the Marquis should see me thrown into the shade by this minion. This very day I shall despatch her, under the care of my woman, to the Superior at Moret, where, till Gerard's return, she may abide for the completion of her education; and should he fall in the wars, as his headlong rashness renders probable, she may become a permanent inmate of the convent. The good abbess has too many obligations to us not to accept a moderate dowry with a kinswoman of the Marchioness de Montméry."

On the return of the Marquis from Draveil, the affair was briefly explained to him; when, as usual, he approved of the arrangements of his wife. But he testified little interest in the affair. His faculties were already impaired by the influence of a malady, which, in a few weeks' time, carried him to the grave, leaving Madame la Marquise sole comptroller of his princely inheritance.

Engrossed by the cares and irritations inseparable from such a charge, Madame de Montméry had scarcely enough leisure to discover the tediousness of a year of widowhood. Though resolved to reappear in the world at its expiration more

brilliant than ever, to imbibe anew the incense of poets and flatterers of the Court, and, if possible, unite herself in second marriage with a man of untarnished blazon and illustrious lineage, she was too much occupied with processes of law, and the *comptes rendus* of her various intendants, to do more than direct the preparation of an infinity of rich attires, and costly suits of jewels, in which she intended to blaze forth on her re-appearance at Versailles. Madame de Pompadour's death (which occurred eight months after that of the Marquis) had cleared the way for a thousand ambitious projects on the part of the unprincipled beauties of the Court of Louis XV.

Of "*cette jeune Esther*," meanwhile, the ostentatious widow knew no more than was communicated once a quarter by her friend the abbess,—namely, that she edified the whole convent by her piety, gentleness, and grace,—to say nothing of the divine beauty which, one day or other, would cause strange emotions among the profane; laudations, accompanied, of course, with the usual claims for the cost of the young lady's maintenance and education. These missives were carefully laid aside by Madame de Montméry, to

be exhibited to her severe brother on his return from the army, in evidence of the noble manner in which she had performed her duty to his *protégée.*

From time to time there arrived a harsh letter from Darley, demanding tidings of his beloved Hester, his nursling, his darling, to which the Marchioness returned a dry and succinct reply. But she saw that there must be no trifling with this stern guardian,—that she was deeply accountable to him for the welfare of the girl,—and that he was capable of proceeding to the worst extremities to avenge any evil that might befall his favourite niece.

What, therefore, was the consternation of Madame de Montméry when, at the expiration of the fifth quarter of Hester's residence at Moret, and of her own widowhood,—just as she was beginning to enjoy, with almost more than her former animation, the gorgeous festivals of Versailles, and the addresses of a hundred noble adorers,—she was apprised by the superior of Moret that Mademoiselle Darley (no longer *cette belle Esther!*) must be instantly removed from the establishment. In the hope of softening by a

gratuity the determination of the abbess, Madame de Montméry hastened with all speed to Moret; but, alas! only to find her perplexities converted into utter consternation. The gentle, timid Hester, the model of *pensionnaires*, had disgraced the convent—her family—herself! Permitted, by the indulgence of the partial abbess, to accompany the noble family of one of her companions to a royal *rendezvous de chasse*, held within half a league of Moret, during the sojourn of the court at Fontainebleau, Hester, on the second day of the fête, had disappeared from her friends,—had been forty-eight hours absent,—and, at length, made her way on foot to the gates of the convent in such a plight as to render her reception a matter of grace on the part of the abbess. To these humiliating statements, and the bursts of fury from the Marchioness which succeeded, poor Hester, pale and motionless as a statue, replied only by an almost unconscious assertion that she was married,—that time would bring her innocence to light,—in confirmation of which she showed on her finger a diamond ring of considerable value. Her two judges were startled. They saw at once that she had fallen a victim to some bold and practised

seducer of the Court. But neither persuasions nor menaces could extract from the lips of the young girl further avowals, further explanation. So public, meanwhile, had been the scandal, that the abbess persisted in her refusal to retain her *pensionnaire;* and, sorely against her will, the Marchioness was forced to convey back the humbled delinquent to the Hôtel de Montméry.

A secluded chamber was now assigned to Hester. The Marchioness decided that the disgrace of the recent event could only be obliterated by an immediate marriage; and nothing was easier than for the rich widow to secure, by a sufficient dowry, an alliance suitable to the modest pretensions of her niece. She even commenced negotiations with the intendant of her Languedoc estates for the hand of his son; and finally signified to Hester, that unless the unknown seducer, whose name she refused to disclose, presented himself within two months to claim her as his wife, she must give her hand to Alexis Duval. Madame de Montméry trembled at the mere apprehension of Gerard's return, till the clearing up of a mystery so dishonourable to his beloved niece.

Meanwhile, nothing could exceed the wretched-

ness of the unhappy Hester. Her obstinacy in refusing to disclose the name of him whom she regarded as her plighted husband, arose, in truth, from ignorance of his title. In offering himself as her protector when separated from her party by the crowd assembled in the gardens of the palace of Fontainebleau to witness a *feu d'artifice* in honour of the King's arrival, he had described himself as one of the royal household; and, on her ingenuous avowal of her own name and situation, had declared himself to be an intimate acquaintance of the Marquise de Montméry. Confiding in this assurance, the poor girl, in the course of the scandalous deceptions practised upon her, after being persuaded to accept a refuge in the palace, gave full credit to his assertions that his rank and fortune were such as to preclude all possibility of refusal on the part of her relations, when he should present himself to claim the hand of his affianced wife. How could she disbelieve him? His deportment was so noble,—his eloquence so convincing,—his manner so graceful! He was the only man from whose lips she had heard avowals of admiration, professions of love; and even now, amid all her humiliations (and the dis-

credit thrown upon her assertions, of having escaped from the palace, on discovering that attempts were made to detain her a prisoner), those professions and those graceful gestures dwelt upon her memory as endowed with only too dangerous a charm. She felt that she could love only that audacious stranger. Morning, noon, and night, she prayed upon her bended knees that he might fulfil his pledge, and appear to claim her as his own, so as to prevent her being forced into a hateful marriage, to the injury of an honourable man.

Certain, from their former conversation, that he for whose crime she was making atonement, was well acquainted with her abode, and might have learned at Moret her removal from the convent, she persuaded herself day after day that her penance was about to end,—that he would come, —that the preparations for her marriage with Alexis Duval would be discontinued,—that happiness was still in store for her. But every night she laid down her aching head upon a sleepless pillow!—No token of his arrival,—no change in her destinies!—

Madame de Montméry had nothing further to

apprehend from the introduction of the poor girl into her *coterie.* "*Cette belle Esther*" was wasting to a shadow. Not a tinge of colour on her cheek,—not a spark of animation in her downcast eyes. To crown all, the preliminaries of peace were signed, and it was expected that a few weeks' time would bring back the French armies from Germany! The Marchioness actually shuddered as she anticipated the arrival of her brother.

"Expect not a day's delay after the appointed period," said she to her suffering niece. "Alexis Duval is already arrived in Paris. The writings are preparing. You will find that I have supplied a handsome dowry and noble *trousseau.* I have neglected nothing to secure the happiness of her who has so ill repaid my former bounties."

Sometimes poor Hester persuaded herself that her unknown lover, not daring to present himself to Madame de Montméry, might be wandering in the vicinity of the Hôtel, in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the object of his attachment. Her allotted chamber overlooked the court-yard; she had no means of obtaining a view of the place. Aware, however, that every day at a certain hour

Madame de Montméry quitted the Hôtel to exhibit herself and her sumptuous equipage on the Cours la Reine, she watched one morning till the coach and six rolled out of the *porte cochère*, and the household servants retreated to the offices; then, stealing from her retreat, made her way to those gorgeous saloons which she never considered without awe, as the habitation of her heartless kinswoman. With a stealthy step she traversed the gaudy chambers, across whose windows were drawn heavy draperies of crimson brocade, embellished with fringes of golden bullion. But the fresh air from without, reached her as she approached the boudoir terminating the suite. That window at least must be open. The termination of all her sorrows was perhaps at hand!—and, with the sanguine impetuosity of youth, the heart of the poor invalid beat almost to bursting, when she reflected that she might be on the eve of beholding him whose features were indelibly impressed upon her memory,—upon her affections.—He, at least, would not despise her—he, at least, must still treat her with gentleness and respect.—

At that moment a strain of music reached her from without. A military band was striking up in

the Place, as if to honour the arrival of some royal personage. With a panting bosom, regardless of the strange figure she must present with her dishevelled hair and long white wrapper, Hester approached the open window. A brilliant procession was indeed passing; the King in person, followed by his whole *état major*, proceeding to pass in review his royal guard upon the esplanade of the Hôtel des Invalides.

Amid the tumultuous clash of cymbals and braying of trumpets that celebrated the royal progress, the crowd assembled in the Place fancied they heard a piercing shriek. And it might be so; for the royal personage, whose uncovered head was so affably declined to the salutations of the multitude, was no other than the lawless libertine of Fontainebleau; and the fair and wasted corpse which, on the return of Madame de Montméry from her drive, was found extended across the sill of the fatal window, was that of the predestined niece of Gerard Darley!—

Fortunately for the Marchioness, her brother was not fated to return alive to France to work out his threat of retribution. It was considered a singular circumstance, however, that from the

period in question to the day of her death, she never again set foot in her Hôtel in the Place Vendôme. Many people conceived that her precipitate retreat to her estates in Languedoc was produced by the refusal of the King to sign her contract of marriage with the Comte de Blainvilier, a member of the royal household. But the publication of the archives of police at the Revolution, proved that Madame de Montméry had been escorted thither under surveillance, by virtue of a *lettre de cachet.* She was never suffered to reappear at court,—Louis XV being desirous to usurp to himself the monopoly of heartlessness and crime, as well as to secure the secret of his disgraceful excesses.

Such was the history of the Fatal Window, to which a superstitious charm was long attached by the after possessors of the Hôtel de Montméry. The demolition of this strange memento of the vices of the olden time occurred within the last few months, in the course of the improvements achieved in the house by its new proprietress,—the Baroness de Feuchères!—

THE RAILROAD.

STERNE's declaration of war against the man who could travel from Dan to Beersheba and "find all barren," is often quoted in a positive and physical sense, by persons who do not seem aware that the denunciation of the sensitive Yorick referred to the exercise of .

> That inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude;

that his diatribe is directed against the stockfish who surveys mankind from China to Peru without finding a kindred sympathy excited; not against such travellers as, condemned to traverse the surface of the world, whether in a '*désobligeante*" or a chaise and four, behold only

flatness in the fields and sterility in the mountains. Yorick himself, for instance, must have admitted the unloveliness of those monotonous plains of cornfield and vineyard which clothe the greater portion of the kingdom of France; dotted with staring unsheltered villages, traversed by straight and hedgeless roads, unenriched by the ornate abodes of the great and wealthy, unendeared by the snug homesteads, the nooky farms, and all the love-stirring domesticity of the rural population of shrubby England!

It is, however, the very absence of circumstantial beauty, constituting the true picturesque of rustic landscape, that imparts a double charm to the occasional snatches of woodland seclusion we stumble upon in the by-ways of the "*plaisant pays de France;*" such as lodges fast by the side of some ancient forest; farm-houses modernized within the ruins of a dilapidated convent; stream-encircled peninsulas embedding a village of almost amphibious growth, with long loose willow-boughs streaming above, and a phalanx of sedges and bulrushes rising around, like a magic fortification; or, better still, some long-winding, sequestered valley, with a bubbling stream keeping

alive its verdure, the green moss of the rising bank on one side shining brightly between the white stems of the abele trees, which, on the other, rustle between the river and the road.

Such was the peculiar attraction of the scattered hamlet of Pierrevau, dotted along a verdant dingle in one of the loneliest cantons of the province of Burgundy; rarely visited, never molested; slumbering, from year to year, in the midst of widely-spreading woodlands; and remote, by two leagues, from the by-road communicating again, at three leagues' distance, with the high-road leading from Dijon to Lyons. Nothing could be more finely primitive than the village and its little community. The adjacent forest-lands being an appanage of the crown, the green basin included within their protecting skirts was divided into some half dozen insignificant farms, cultivated by proprietors united among themselves by intermarriages; undisturbed by ambition or speculative projects; indifferent to the faint rumours of the far-off world—to the progress of human knowledge—to the growth of civilized institutions; familiar only with the earth under their feet and the sky above their heads; nay, far

more familiarized with the idea of the omnipotent King of Kings weekly propounded to their love and reverence, than with that of the merely temporal sovereign whose name became paramount in the valley only four times a-year, on occasions of tax-gathering, or other direct or indirect contributions towards the maintenance of the state.

Even the periodical intercourse kept up in the way of trade with M——, the nearest market town (at the distance of about thirteen English miles from Pierrevau), tended little towards either the enlightenment or demoralization of the place. Besnard the miller, the only scholar of the district, found himself too heavily charged with neighbourly commissions on such occasions, to have leisure for bringing back political or other news among the items of his homeward-bound cargo; and of the farmers forming the complement of village *notabilités*, only one was sufficiently addicted to letters to have been capable of spelling out a newspaper, had any such bulletin of the sayings and doings of mankind found its way into the valley.

Nor was the tax of postage often levied on their modest treasuries. Such Pierrevalites as,

few and far between, became smitten with a taste for roaming, were heard of at home no more till they arrived in person to relate their adventures or misadventures in the wider world; and those who appeared not again, whether carried off by the conscription or a truant disposition, came to be accounted dead and buried, though neither letter nor sepulchral stone might be deputed to "tell where they lay." It may easily be conjectured, therefore, that such wanderers as *did* return, came fraught with monstrous tales and inventions of the marvels of distant countries and Indian oceans;—that the travels of Sinbad and Gulliver were emulated in their reminiscences;—and that the common world became a world of wonders to the guileless inhabitants of the valley.

The curé, a grey-headed man, sometimes ventured to point out inconsistencies in the tales thus rendered legendary among his credulous parishioners. But the good man, whose lore little exceeded that of his neighbours, was readily rebuked by the citation of Scriptural precedents; and compelled to avow, in apology, that the age of miracles might not be altogether past. For, though the course of nature was so smooth

at Pierrevau,—though year after year the roses blew to a day, cultivated in his little garden to decorate his church for its patronal feast of St John,—though the hazels ripened in due season in the thickets, and the tender sallows put forth their yellow catkins,—though the swallow and the woodcock had their appointed time, and the yellow grain or purple clover its stated harvests,—what right had he or his flock to deny the existence of countries whose pebbles were of jasper, whose rocks of sardine stone,—whose bowels gave forth flames as from the depths of Tophet,—whose bosom quaked and trembled, as with a convulsion of human passion,—whose swallows were ever on the wing,—whose cornfields of fourfold produce?—

Among the most passive of the modifications of human nature inhabiting Pierrevau, was a widower of the name of Lambert; an aged man, whose cottage, garden, and an adjoining paddock, having descended to him in a direct line for four generations, qualified him to rank as an equal among neighbouring farmers of thrice his number of acres. His outlay was small, his gains uniform; he had never been required to strain a nerve or

a muscle to cope with extraordinary expenditure, sickness, or disaster; his days and nights had passed in easy contentment and cheerful labour; he took pleasure in the earth and its gladsome sounds and sights; rejoiced in the good will of his neighbours; and seemed to know no deeper cares than those arising from their incidental troubles.

The wife he had espoused from the prudential motives which originate the alliances of his countrymen of all degrees, had died too soon after his marriage to leave a painful or lasting impression on his mind. His son, Felix, had been an obedient, early-working boy, and was now a warm-hearted, hard-working man; and, as to his orphan niece, Aimée, she was so gentle, so pious, so submissive, and withal so passing pretty, that, in any other atmosphere than that of uneventful and undemonstrative Pierrevau, it might have been accounted wonderful that her uncle seemed to reckon her only as part and parcel of his domestic chattels,—about as necessary to his comfort as his great cherry-wood chair,—about as valuable to his sight as the antique Delft porringer gracing his family buffet. But Aimée was scarcely seven-

teen; and it was not for a year to come that she was to acquire her full importance in his eyes, by becoming the wife of her cousin, Felix; part-proprietress of the cow it was already her duty to milk,—of the six silver spoons and forks bearing the family initials,—of the Delft porringer, cherry-wood chair, and, above all, of a renowned Chaumontel pear-tree, gracing the corner of the cottage garden, and currently whispered in the village to add little less than two hundred francs a-year to Lambert's income. Never, in fact, were seen such pears, so juicy, so shapely, so smooth-skinned, as those of Lambert's tree; and they were accordingly bespoken, from year to year, by a *patissier* of M——, engaged in commercial dealings with a celebrated *marchand de comestibles* of the Palais Royal.

By some strange perversity, however, it happened that the spirit of restlessness engendered about a score of times in the course of a century in the breast of some less worthy Pierrevalite, became demonstrated, in the present generation, in that of Lambert's pretty niece! It was not that Aimée was dissatisfied with her lot. She had been brought too young to Lambert's cottage

to entertain recollections of an earlier stage of existence; and, though the curé had taught her to read, her acquirements were exercised so sparingly, and on such chosen books of devotion, that her little learning had not proved a dangerous thing. She knew little more of the world and its ways than could be gathered from the legends of the elders of the valley, or the disclosures of Besnard the miller, when his lips were opened by the excitement of market-day.

It must have been instinct, therefore, which, stirring the pure current of Aimée's blood, suggested to her that, graceful as was the face of nature on which she was habituated to gaze, art had also amassed an exquisite confusion of graces in a peculiar world of its own; and that, kind and good as was her cousin Felix, a less tuneless voice than his might be moved to whisper words of tenderness in her ear. She saw in the groves and fields things that had no existence for the eye of Felix; she experienced in the brilliancy of the summer sky a sense of exaltation which he knew not of; and, while he called upon her to rejoice in the growth of the beans that were to fatten his hogs, or the excellence of the manure

with which he was bedaubing the paddock, Aimée was longing for her labours of the day to end, that she might wander forth to enjoy

> The silence that is in the starry sky—
> The sleep that is between the lonely hills.

Wilder wanderings, happily, she dreamed not of. She knew that her days must begin and end at Pierrevau; and old Lambert was spared the perplexity of listening to aspirations he was so little gifted to comprehend.

Strange rumours were, at length, destined to break in upon this primeval stage of Pierrevalite torpor. Besnard the miller, on returning one evening from market, gave forth an oracular intimation, that a *chemin de fer*, long projected by government, was actually about to be carried through the valley!—

"Bah!" cried Felix; "an *iron* road, indeed! What are they dreaming of?—There is neither iron nor copper in this part of the country."

"It must be some mistake," resumed his father; "Besnard has washed down his *bouilli* with a glass of Macon too much; or 'tis to some other Pierrevau, situated in the mining districts, that his story bears reference."

No! Besnard was positive; and, on the morrow morning, standing beside his mill-dam, and having tasted nothing more heady for breakfast than a mug of small Burgundy, persisted in the accuracy of his narrative. He even condescended to expound to his wondering auditors, that, according to the explanations vouchsafed him the preceding day, a *chemin de fer* meant neither a road bottomed with iron ore, nor even destined for the exclusive conveyance of that valuable mineral; but a railroad calculated for the acceleration of general transport, and the advantage of commercial dispatch. The Pierrevalites scratched their heads, and tried to understand; when, lo! in the course of a few days, there arrived at one of the forest-lodges a detachment of government surveyors, engineers, and commissioners; and, from that moment, all was terror and confusion in the district.

Rumour,—although, instead of her thousand tongues, she could only put in motion the four hundred indigenous to the place,—was not inactive; and it was soon known that hills and houses were to be levelled—dells and gardens filled up—fields and plantations devastated—a bridge thrown

over the stream—a road thrown over the bridge;—confusion worse confounded was about to annihilate the valley!—

Some trembled and despaired; some prophesied that changes so preposterous could never be brought to bear during their generation; but a twelvemonth and a day had not ensued from Besnard's first astounding announcement, when they had not only resigned themselves to the impending evil, but to the spectacle of the huge embankment of earth and mortar, the vast cairns of bricks and stone—nay, even to the tumult occasioned by the cantonment of nearly two thousand workmen in the district. The tranquillity of Pierrevau seemed gone for ever! The otter and the plover fled from their tranquil haunts beside the stream; the thrush was heard no longer in the thickets at eventide; the lark forsook the defiled and trampled turf; and, instead of these, there were the curses of angry voices in the air, the threat of authority, the rebuke of the master, the discontent of the labourer, the rattle of carts, the rumble of barrows, the click of trowels, the chipping of brick and stone!—

Even the social order of the place seemed

totally reversed. Some of the poorest had been suddenly made rich by the mere accident of the line of road being designated to overthrow their miserable cottages, and occupy their modicum of land; some of the richest, fancied themselves ill-used in the estimate of compensation conceded to them by government, or even by preferences supposed to be evinced in the line selected; and though, in every instance, the value of their property was doubled, all were discontented. Their greatness had been thrust upon them. They fancied, or declared, that they would rather have chosen to retain their pristine and penurious obscurity.

But there was one among the throng of grumblers who, till now so friendly and familiar among his neighbours, maintained on the present occasion a rigid silence; and the world (for Pierrevau had already become a portion of the world), ever ready to judge of human actions in the least favourable point of view, soon settled that Lambert, now the richest of the community, had grown proud as well as wealthy; that, favoured by the partiality of the commissioners, he was ready to side with them against his former associates. For

it happened that his whole narrow slip of territory had been comprehended in the railroad; that his house, garden, and paddock, existed no longer; and that the submission or supineness with which he left the measure of his compensation to the sense of justice of the engineers and commissioners, had been instrumental in raising it somewhat above the ordinary level. None perceived that this very supineness proceeded from the extremity of desperate discontent. Lambert possessed enough inborn, untaught philosophy, to know that to wrestle with that mysterious agency called authority, is a fruitless struggle. But so hateful in his eyes was the interpolation of the railroad into his native valley, that he fancied it a matter of indifference to him whether it brought pecuniary gain or loss. One of the station-houses belonging to the road had been appointed, unsolicited, to his use,—a comfortable, well-distributed, stone dwelling-house, with a small adjoining garden; while Felix, his son, had profitably exchanged the condition of husbandman for that of fuel-meter and train-loader. Plenty smiled at their board, and Lambert might have droned away the remainder of his days in idleness, or training

Spanish beans over the latticed porch of his new dwelling, without fear of future necessity.

But the old man was too heavy at heart to enjoy even the do-nothingness of competence. The harmony of his days was jarred for ever! The thatch under which he was born was trampled under foot; the walls, every crack of which was familiar to his eyes, had no longer an existence; the old oven whose weekly heating had formed an incident in his life, was demolished; the latch he had lifted to enter into his bridal chamber,—to stand beside the cradle of his first-born,—the death-bed of his wife,—was wrenched off and thrown into the rubbish-pit, as an outworn and valueless thing. The very spot upon the brick-floor, whereon for threescore years he had nightly knelt down to worship God,—where he had seen his father and his grey-headed grandsire kneel and pray before him,—was gone—vanished—forgotten!—

A portion of his very existence seemed taken from him. These things were the life of *his* uneventful life,—the poetry of his loreless soul,—the mementos of youth, which more enlightened men attach to higher objects or public events. It is true, his household goods were now removed to

more auspicious shelter. The cherry-tree chair stood beside a chimney with a marble ledge; the enameled Delft porringer was ensconced in a glazed corner-cupboard of ample dimensions; the silver spoons and forks were laid shiningly side by side in a varnished press; the old walnut-wood bed was stationed in a light and airy chamber. But they did not harmonize with their new abode. There was a discrepancy, as between the Grecian peristyle of Greenwich Hospital, or the gilt dome of the Invalides, and the cells of the wooden-legged veterans crowded beneath. The fitness of things was wanting, even to an indifferent eye. But to the eye of Lambert, how infinitely more! The sense of home, the associations of early years, were there no longer!

It was probably this craving after lost pleasures and habits broken asunder, that drove him forth constantly from his new dwelling, to wander about the neighbourhood; selfishly triumphing, as the Pierrevallites imagined, in the spectacle of its busy enlivenment,—of the new buildings arising,—the new speculations springing up,—the new population intruded into its limits. But it was assuredly the coldness of his former asso-

ciates that soon drove the old man back again to his cheerless home. For Lambert disdained to explain what was really passing in his mind. He saw himself misjudged by those of whose favourable interpretation he had thought himself secure; and scorned to avow that a deeper sentiment than even his home-partiality, had been crushed by the great event. For, within a few months after the commencement of the railroad, Aimée had taken him aside, and declared her fixed determination against becoming the wife of her cousin.

She had given, indeed, no explanation of her change of inclinations; yet Lambert could not help connecting it, by some invisible concatenation, with the grand revolution of affairs in the Happy Valley. Though Felix was now fourfold richer than before, the old man felt his own prejudices and partialities so rudely intrenched upon, that he could well believe his pretty niece might have learned to abhor a spot whence rural repose was banished; where she had no cow to tend, or garden flowers and fruit to gather; where she could no longer range in peace among thickets of dogrose and honeysuckle, peeping into

the linnet's nest, or searching the hollow sycamore trees for the comb of the wild bee. She had pledged herself indeed to her uncle, in declining to become his daughter-in-law, to remain single for his sake; to abide with him and tend him in his old age; a promise inconsistent with any sudden aversion to his place of abode. But that she could have conceived a dislike towards his frank and jovial son, appeared far more inconceivable than a sudden accession of feminine inconsistency.

"Yet, if she knew all," argued Lambert within himself, as he stood watching the distant disappearance of a train along the now active railroad—"if she knew herself to be the child of misery,—the child of shame,—harboured for brotherly-mercy's sake beneath my roof; if she knew that the hovel whose destruction grieves me, had sheltered her mother's tears, and screened her bitter deathbed;—if she knew—if she knew——"

And the old man would clasp his hands over his furrowed forehead, and strive to hide the big rolling tears which Aimée's apostasy had wrung out of his heart! For, neither to neigh-

bour, friend, nor son, had he ever allowed himself to hint the secret of his family dishonour. The effort of his blameless life,—the one great labour,—had been to overcome the pangs thereby created, and conceal the scar engendered by so deep a wound.

Meanwhile, Aimée,—unsuspicious of the extent of her gracelessness towards her uncle, and satisfied to perceive that Felix, after a few weeks' incredulity and a few weeks' amazement, had reconciled himself to his disappointment, and was turning his attention towards the full-blown charms of Clairette, the miller Besnard's daughter,—pursued her customary avocations with a degree of cheerfulness derived from the consciousness of a duty fulfilled. A mountain was removed from her mind. Her assiduities to the old man were unembittered by the apprehension that a time would come when, loathing her husband, even her husband's father might become an object of aversion. She even ceased to repine over the loss of her rural pleasures.

"So long as my uncle survives I have a home," said she to herself, on noticing the probability that Lambert's new residence would shortly find a mis-

tress in the person of a Madame Felix; "and when it pleases heaven to take the good old man to himself, I will not be a burden to my cousin. I will go into service. I have heard that, in her youth, my mother grew weary of Pierrevau, and went into service; and I too will labour for my independence, and die in a home of my own providing."

For Aimée, whose cradle had been her mother's dying bosom, knew not that the poor victim had wandered back to Pierrevau, to lay her head in her native dust; Lambert having gently checked his niece whenever her inquiries went near to detect the mystery of that earliest blot upon the page of her humble destinies.

One evening, early in the autumn succeeding their establishment at the station-house, Aimée, during the temporary absence of her cousin, who, as usual, had found his way to the mill, was gazing with vexation at the little patch of ground, composed of mortar and rubbish, and inaccessible to vegetation, surrounding their new habitation (so different from the rich, deep, fertile, garden soil of the old cottage, whose carnations and sweetwilliams had been renowned in the

country), when her attention was arrested by the sound of a strange voice; and she perceived a middle-aged traveller leaning from his horse towards the paling, and about to accost her. He had brought an especial letter of recommendation from the commissioners of the railroad to Père Lambert, and wished to take up his abode for a few days at the station-house, instead of establishing himself in the noisy little inn recently set up in the valley.

She proceeded, accordingly, to summon her uncle, and put all in order for the reception of the stranger. His horse was turned into the stable, his hat was taken from him, and a thousand welcomes bidden to one who came trebly entitled to hospitality—as a foreigner, an invalid, and the chosen friend of those who had dealt so liberally by Lambert in the disposal of his property. Two circumstances, however, seemed startling to Aimée as connected with the arrival of their unexpected guest; the marked and perplexed interest with which he gazed upon herself, and the puzzled look with which her uncle examined his visitor. The latter peculiarity she expounded by her recollection of the intense dislike

nourished by Lambert against the English, to which locomotive nation she every moment expected the stranger would announce himself to belong. The former needed no explanation. It was no new thing to Aimée to find herself an object of attention.

The traveller *was*, in fact, an English gentleman of the name of Vernon, who, having passed a considerable portion of his life in India for the acquirement of fortune and disease, now applied his wealth to the assuagement of his maladies by incessant travel. He had traversed, he said, most parts of the Continent; and, having paused for a few days at M——, and heard much of the scenery of Pierrevau and the wonders of the railroad, obtained letters of recommendation to the keepers of the various station-houses, and quitted his ponderous equipage for the enjoyment of an equestrian tour.

All this was plausible enough. Lambert and his son were of opinion that nothing could be more natural than for the fine scenery of the valley to allure tourists to the spot; and when, on the morrow, Mr Vernon announced himself so much refreshed by the excellent air of the place, as to

be desirous of passing a week or ten days *en pension* with his new hosts, he had so far won upon the old man's feelings that no objection was raised. His proposals were liberal, his manners gentle. His grey hair and wasted cheek begat a sympathy in Lambert's heart; and he was even forgiven the sin of being an Englishman, in favour of his enthusiasm for Pierrevau, and the mild humility of his demeanour. Felix rejoiced that his father should have some one to bear him company, when, at the close of the day's duties, he set off for the mill; and Aimée appeared to find a congenial spirit in the enlightened, far-travelled, deep-read, and patient invalid. Even when the appointed week, ten days, fortnight, fixed for his sojourn elapsed, and Mr Vernon again proposed its prolongation, the request was heard by all with pleasure. He had no vulgar fastidiousness; but, submitting himself to the habits of the place, seemed to make himself one of the family; and, whether it were the humble philosophy of Lambert that formed the fascination of the circle, or the unobtrusive loveliness of Lambert's niece, certain it was that Monsieur Vernon experienced insuperable difficulties in quitting the spot.

Even Aimée, at the close of three weeks, began to be a little moved by the close attention lavished on her by the stranger. It was not that, for a single moment, he had overstepped the barrier of paternal interest becoming their relative age and position in the world. But why should Mr Vernon follow her so closely in her walks?—why so closely interrogate her sentiments on all possible subjects? — why so labour to acquaint himself with her views and feelings, unless from cherishing views and feelings of his own, of which she was the leading object?—

"You do not appear jealous of your cousin's intention to bring home a bride, Aimée," said he, one day, as they were sauntering together along the shrubby brow of a hill commanding an extensive view of the railroad. "Yet, but a short time ago, scarcely a year, you had made up your mind to become Madame Felix, and assume the direction of his household. How was it that your intentions changed so suddenly? — How was it you could disappoint the projects of your good uncle?"—

"*That* you must inquire of those who have

already initiated you so far into our family history," replied the young girl, smiling. "But my uncle has surely no reason to be discontented with the change. Clairette Besnard has four thousand crowns for her dowry, and is attached to my cousin Felix. *I* never loved him, otherwise than as a kind relation; and am penniless."

"Nevertheless, I am assured," persisted Vernon, pausing to pluck a tuft of the wild scabious, and offer it to his companion, "that, until last autumn, you evinced no positive repugnance to the marriage arranged for you; and that 'tis not the custom of the damsels of these cantons to exercise a choice in such matters."—

"It may be so," replied Aimée, almost petulantly. "But my uncle is satisfied,—my cousin is satisfied,—I am satisfied,—and what matters it that the gossips, our neighbours, find fault with me?"—And, as she pushed her way somewhat briskly along the hill in order to escape further catechization, she could not help suspecting that some busy intermeddler had been talking to her new friend of a certain Monsieur Clément (the young engineer originally despatched into the valley by the projectors of the railroad), who

had been a singularly frequent guest at Lambert's cottage, but who, from the period of the completion of his survey, had been heard of no more at Pierrevau. For even her uncle was secretly inclined to trace the sudden change in Aimée's disposition to the influence of this transient acquaintance. It was not till Monsieur Clément's arrival, she had ever seemed conscious of an incompatibility between her own character and that of her cousin; nor was it till six months after his departure, that she had declared her intention of passing the remainder of her days in single blessedness.

Yet, notwithstanding her jealous conjecture, neither Lambert, nor Felix, nor the Besnard family, nor any other officious Pierrevallite, had ever referred, directly, or indirectly, to the young engineer, in conversing with the English invalid. Where, then, could he have gathered his information? — or were his inuendoes only the result of chance?

Her uncle, meanwhile, watched with some uneasiness the growing familiarity between his inmate and his niece. It was not that there was anything dangerously seductive in the outward

man of the valetudinarian. But Lambert had good sense enough to feel that habitual intercourse with the polished and educated, was not likely to inspire his niece with a taste for the society of those of her own condition in life; and to fear that, if two months' intimacy with young Clément had decided her that she could not hope for happiness in perpetual companionship with her illiterate cousin, the conversation of the more refined Vernon was likely to complete the mischief. So strong, however, was his confidence in the excellences of his mild and melancholy guest, that he resolved to make known his fears, and appeal to his own sense of justice on the subject.

"Do not alarm yourself, my good friend," was the frank Englishman's reply to this singular avowal. "Nothing is less likely than that I should acquire over Aimée's mind the species of influence which you seem to think has been already perniciously exercised. But this I promise you; that if, at the expiration of another month's sojourn in your family,—a month of unmolested intercourse with your niece,—she should admit her feelings to be touched in my favour, I will instantly make her my wife. I am rich,—

unencumbered; nay, do not break forth into declarations of disinterestedness or professions of gratitude; for, believe me, nothing is more improbable than such a contingency. — I have strong reasons for what I advance."

This honourable engagement, notwithstanding the disclaimer by which it was qualified, tended at least to open the heart and mind of Lambert towards his guest,— the guest who thus identified himself with his family interests.

"I can scarce make out!"—the old man would say, as they sat together under one of the spreading sycamores of the valley, flourishing so near the banks of the mill-stream as to have escaped the invasion of the railroad—"I can scarcely yet explain to myself how you, sir, who belong to a nation I abhor, and have a right to abhor, have won so warmly on my esteem. It sometimes seems to me that I am fated in my latter age to lay aside all the natural likings and dislikings of my youth. All I loved as a boy is rooted up—past—forgotten—as though it had never existed. No trace remains of the home of my forefathers. There was an old pear-tree stood beside it, sir. Will you believe it that I,—

a grown man,—an elder,—am sometimes inclined to sit down and weep that it should have been cut down and burned in the fire?—The railroad people paid me twice the value of the tree; for my neighbours were ready to stand forward and attest how fine was the fruit, and how sure of purchase; and there is a seedling of the old stock in my friend Besnard's garden. But will the price paid me, or four times as much, bring back to my old heart the thoughts and feelings that came thronging upon me as I sat under its green branches and thought of the time when, as a breechless urchin, I listened to my father and mother computing their expected gains from its produce, when the white blossoms were just bursting from the bough,—showering new youth, as it were, upon the gnarled and hoary branches? How fondly they proposed, if the summer season proved prosperous and the fruit abundant, to give such and such comforts to the children, or make such and such provisions for the coming winter!—I had a sister, sir,—(I shall gain courage to speak more fully of her hereafter),—a young, fair sister. I was nearly fourteen when she was born, and she was almost as a child to me. How

well do I remember fondling her an infant, in my arms, under that old pear-tree; and afterwards reproving her, when I could fix her attention and draw her aside under its shadow unobserved by her parents, when she grew up into a wild, gay girl, and my poor wife admonished me that Anna sadly needed chiding!"—

Vernon gave an involuntary start, and uttered a scarcely conscious sigh, as Lambert proceeded in his monologue.

"And now, the cursed railroad, which seems to have made me rich only to make me lonesome, runs where that pear-tree stood!—The spring-tide comes, and I no longer see its white blossoms trembling bride-like in the breeze; and no cool, green, glossy shade quivers in summer beside my door, to allure me forth into the freshness, where I may sit meditating upon the mercies and greatness of God!—I seem to have lost my only remaining friend, sir, in that old tree!"—

"You forget your son," remonstrated Vernon.

"No! I do not forget him—I should deserve that God might forget *me* were I so ungrateful," replied the old peasant. "But for years and years, it was my darling hope that he would be

brought nearer as it were to my affections, by marrying with all that remained to me of my precious Anna,—my sweet sister; and giving me grandchildren that might wear her look, and bear her name, and renew round my declining years the recollections that are almost beginning to fade from my mind. But Aimée's obstinacy decreed it otherwise; and I have had too fatal a warning in my time, to try to subdue by opposition the working of a woman's will. And now, Felix is about to bring home a stranger to take Aimée's place, and be to me as a daughter. Clairette is a good girl, I believe, but she is quick, loud, prone to noisy junketing, very different from my soft, peaceful-hearted niece; and I cannot reconcile myself to the change. And should what you have spoken of come to pass, should the poor girl, in spite of the difference of age betwixt you, really evince a preference so as to induce you to make her your wife, think, sir, think of all I should lose! You will remove her from Pierrevau—from France; will make a lady of her, will perhaps render her even ashamed of her parentage and kindred;—and I shall become hopeless and helpless in my old age!—Better for me to

give up the ghost upon her wedding day!"—And again the old man wrung his hands, and wept bitterly.

"Make your mind easy, worthy friend," exclaimed Vernon, entering warmly into his feelings. "I, at least, shall never be instrumental in the disunion you anticipate. Nay! why should I not repay your confidence by equal candour? Why not avow, at once, that to become the husband of your niece has never entered into my calculations? Although *you* have not named him, I can scarcely fancy you have forgotten the existence of Clément, the engineer, your guest last season? That youth, my good Lambert, is very dear to me. I know that, during his visit to Pierrevau, he attached himself to your niece; but that, dependent upon me for his means of subsistence, he made no attempt to engage her affections in return. He persuaded himself that I should not be moved to consent to his union with a peasant's child; nor was it till very lately, in noticing a painful alteration in his health and spirits, I obtained from my young friend an avowal of his attachment. From that moment, I did not hesitate. Resolved to ascertain by per-

sonal observation the worthiness of its object ere I sanctioned the sacrifice of higher prospects, I came hither to judge for myself. I saw in Aimée all that was endearing and attractive; and the honesty with which, in rejecting this very morning the offer of my own hand and fortune (tendered as a touchstone of her affections for—for my—my *protegé*), she admitted her previous attachment, and even—generous girl!—explicitly named its object, has determined me in her favour. Let the young couple be happy together. To Clément I will secure a liberal independence, enabling him to cultivate his profession for the benefit of his future family, rather than from present necessity. The Chateau de Massignac, between M—— and Pierrevau, is on sale, and may be purchased to afford them a summer house within reach of Aimée's kind uncle. *There*, my good Lambert, you and I will meet together every future summer, and find some auspicious substitute for the old pear-tree, and a solace for former afflictions."

Vernon held out his hand cordially as he spoke; but Lambert, absorbed in reflection, neglected to accept the pledge.

"You have not yet explained your intentions to my niece?" faltered he, with blanched cheeks, while the dew of perturbation rose on his withered temples.—

"Not yet."

"Thank Heaven!"

"Why thank Heaven!—I have taken my determination deliberately, and am not likely to repent. To-morrow, in your own presence, I will disclose all to Aimée."

"Would it were likely!" murmured poor Lambert. "But noble as are your views, they cannot be brought to pass. There exist obstacles rendering such a marriage impossible."

"I heartily hope not!" cried the Englishman, almost beginning to share the emotion of his companion. "My heart is set upon it."

"Would it be still set on the marriage," inquired Lambert, in a scarcely audible voice, "if you learned that my innocent niece was the offspring of guilt?—If, instead of being the child of honest peasant parents,—a parentage to which you adverted just now as a more than sufficient stigma,—you were to find her the daughter, the illegitimate daughter, of a scoundrel?—No! you

would *not!*—I read her condemnation in your silence! It is only I,—her uncle,—the brother of the victim,—who could take the poor girl to my heart, and deal towards her as if she were the descendant of princes!"—

"You are mistaken," was the Englishman's mild rejoinder. "My hesitation proceeded from no such motive. *I* too, on the contrary, have my painful confessions to make. Clément also is a natural son."

A ray of joy illumined the countenance of Lambert. "That I should rejoice in such a thing!"—cried he. "Yet all is for the best! Heaven, in this matter, has ministered directly for our happiness. But it is fit that you should know more, sir,—should know all,—ere you pledge yourself definitively to the performance of your promises.

"Monsieur Vernon, I have already expressed to you the warmth of my affection for that young sister who might almost have passed for a daughter of my own. Nor was poor Anna less preciously dear to her parents. She was the child of their old age, as it were,—the child almost of their dotage; so that they neglected to check, in the disposition of their darling, such indications of

wilfulness as, at a more rational epoch of life, would not have been suffered to expand to her destruction. My own wife was the first to point out to me that Anna's perversity might, at some miserable moment, tend to her destruction; and when, a year or two after my marriage (which was an arrangement concluded by my parents), my friend Besnard proposed to become the husband of our pretty Anna, and, suitable as such a match would have been for her, she positively and tenaciously refused her consent,—I began to see that my poor woman was in the right; and that among us all, we had been guilty of ruining the poor girl's disposition, by pernicious indulgence. For no sooner did Anna perceive that my father was bent on making her the wife of our neighbour the miller, than off she went at once from Pierrevau! — She had unfortunately money enough in her savings' purse to command the means of escape; and, leaving a few lines in her chamber to acquaint us that she had made up her mind to work out an honest independence rather than become a burthen to her family, or the wife of a man who was the object of her aversion, she disappeared from the place !—

"What a day it was in the old cottage when Anna was missed!—She was but sixteen years of age,—the favourite, the idol, the darling of all our hearts and eyes! And to show so little care for us!—You may guess that it was a sore trial! From my grey-headed grandfather to little Felix, then a prattling infant, all wept for her, all pined after her. One minute, my father and mother swore to banish her for ever from their affections, and her very name was to be named among us no more; the next, they would have been glad to kneel down and kiss the dust under her feet, had she crossed the threshold of the cottage.

"But, alas! she put not our tenderness to the trial. She came no more. While all was grief and lamentation under her father's roof, Anna, it seems, arrived in safety in the great city, of which during his courtship Besnard had been so fond of boasting to her; and her beauty, youth, and artlessness availed to place her, without further recommendation, in a *magazin* in Paris; one of those embroidery-shops for ladies' work, where a forewoman of attractive appearance is so valuable an acquisition. It was from thence, sir, she wrote to acquaint her parents that she was well, safe,

happy, and in a way towards the accomplishment of her desires; satisfied that she had done wisely in avoiding, by an extreme measure, a marriage which must have ended in misery.

"My father and mother began to reconcile themselves to her absence, seeing that she seemed to speak so reasonably, and to have placed herself under such respectable protection; and even when, six months afterwards, she wrote a second time, informing us she had been persuaded to accept the situation of waiting-maid in an English family of distinction, the privacy of which she preferred to the fatigue and exposure of a shop,—it was only the idea of menial servitude in our family which grieved us for Anna's sake. But you seem indisposed, sir," continued Lambert, checking himself,—"You look pale,—faint.—Let us return to the house, and I can conclude my melancholy story when you are more disposed to listen."

"No," replied Vernon, averting his head—"I cannot be more disposed to listen than now. My interest is only too painfully excited."

"Just at that period," resumed Lambert, "my whole attention was absorbed by the decay and death of my poor wife; and, about a year after her

decease, the boy she had left me fell into a grievous fever; so that, with family cares of one kind or other, I had scarcely leisure to become anxious, when my mother sometimes reminded me that Anna had ceased to write; that, travelling with English heretics, she had perhaps ceased to take thought of Pierrevau and her family; and that something must surely be amiss. But, at length, one chilly spring evening (I remember it, alas! as a thing of yesterday), I was returning from the mill whither I had been to consult Besnard's new wife touching the sickness of my son; when, as I turned across the fields from the stream towards our old cottage, methought I heard a voice calling upon my name.

"The sound was at once faint and shrill; but it seemed to say—'Lambert—Lambert!' in a tone that brought the blood up to my very temples; so familiar it was, and yet so strange. For a moment I was superstitious enough to think of my poor wife, who was dead and gone; for I discovered the glimmering of a white figure beneath the hazel bushes near the river, and fancied the poor soul could not rest in her grave, but was come forth to greet me by the way with counsel

for the sake of the child who had been so dear to her. Nay, I could scarcely find breath to answer, till the faint voice called upon me again—'Lambert—Lambert!' and in a moment the recollection of my dear little sister rushed upon my mind!—'Anna is surely dead in some foreign country,' I thought, 'and behold her spirit has wandered home!'—for no one could have dreamed that the voice, or the being who soon stood beside me, belonged to human life and breath. But, when her tears fell on my cheek, and her bosom heaved upon mine, and she whispered, 'My brother—a poor broken-hearted creature is come home to die at your feet!' then I knew that it was indeed my living sister I held in my arms; and that the world had gone sorely with one whose childhood had been so happy, and whose youth so cherished!

"And so we sat down together in the twilight upon a green bank; and I dared not even give vent to the grieved and angry feelings with which I listened to the recital of the poor girl's wrongs and sufferings; for so afflicted and so exhausted was she, that I feared every moment might prove her last. Anna was about to become a mother, sir, and her child was the child of misery;—yea,

even the child whom you have destined to become the wife of one whom I cannot but suppose your son." And Lambert groaned aloud, and hid his face with his hands, ere he proceeded; nor was it till the Englishman, grasping his arm with energy, implored him to continue his recital, that he found words for the details of his family disgrace.

"Her first prayer to me was to conceal her arrival for a time from the knowledge of her parents, till I had found occasion to divulge, at least to her mother, the grievous motives of her return. So we lingered and lingered among the thickets till nightfall; and, when all was stillness and sleep in the old cottage, she crept in, like a guilty thing; and it was in my poor wife's chamber (which for a year past had been closed up from use) that I laid the wanderer down to rest. And truly she needed rest; for a sorer sight of weariness, and want, and woe, never presented itself, than when I unclasped her mantle, and laid aside her head-gear, and looked face to face upon her who, three years before, had been the boast and pride of Pierrevau!

Next day, I had no difficulty in conveying food to the room; and began to hope I should find

time to break the matter by degrees to the old people, ere the worst came to pass. But it might not be. The agitation of finding herself a shamed and miserable outcast under the roof she had left in her wilfulness,—pure, stainless, uncontaminated, —proved too much for my poor sister. The pangs of travail came hurriedly on; and anxiously as I contrived to procure her matron aid from the village, and careful as she was, in the extremity of her anguish, to suppress every moan, every murmur that might betray her to the inmates of the cottage, — my mother's suspicions became directed towards the deserted chamber. However unjustifiable her opinion that I could be tempted to dishonour the home of my father,—the deathbed of my wife,—by a scene of infamy, she began to entertain a mistrust of misdoings, which induced her to steal up after me into the chamber, and ascertain what was going on.

" What a scene to meet a mother's eye! When the poor woman softly stole into what she had rashly judged to be the chamber of dalliance, there —faint, pallid, death-stricken,—a wretched infant wailing by her side,— lay the darling of her age; —even as yet scarcely more than a child, but

already lost—already doomed to the dust! In a moment, my mother lay insensible on the threshold; and, ere I found strength to bear her from the room, my father, roused by the noise, tottered there in his turn, to bestow his malediction on a head whereon he had so long been accustomed to lavish blessings!"

Vernon wiped the cold dew from his forehead, but remained silent.

"Judge, sir, of the care it cost me," at length resumed his companion, "to subdue the rage of one, to pacify the anguish of the other, and, above all, to raise and cheer the spirits of the sinking, *dying* woman! It was already too late to hope for Anna's survival; but it would have been too much to feel that she expired under her father's curse,—her mother's reprobation. For, after all, sir, she was our own still; our flesh, our blood, our once loved nursling, whom we had petted and nurtured into folly; nay, and still uncontaminated, as you may judge by listening to the avowals which, during the few days she was yet spared, she confided to the ear of her brother.

"The people by whom she had been persuaded to quit her way of life were of first-rate family

and fortune, even in that strange country of England, where money and consequence appear so plentiful. The father had been one of the king's ministers; and having resigned his place in a fit of testiness, was travelling on the Continent to conceal his own discomfiture, but on pretence of completing the education of his daughters, whom he suffered to run wild as they listed—all for wantonness, all for sport, all for pleasure—so that they interfered not with his graver avocations. But there was, unluckily, a brother too,—a brother whom the old lord saw fit to make the companion of his travels, in order that his daughters might not require from himself the attendance and protection which apparently they so much needed. This Edward (Anna on her death-bed named him only as her Edward) was not destined to succeed to the wealth and titles of his father. In your country it seems there exists among the great that scandalous preference for the first-born son, which creates a few vast estates and an unreckonable diffusion of misery; and Edward was destined to repair the injury inflicted upon him by his parents by exile to a far off Indian country—a place, I think, called Ceylon—among heathens and beasts

of prey. By way, I suppose, of reconciling the young man to his future alienation, he was the one selected by his father to accompany the family in wandering about the rich, fertile, and happy plains of France! The others were pursuing their education at home: some to gain a livelihood by becoming priests, some soldiers, some even lawyers,—so strange are your English notions of nobleness and dignity!—

"All this was gradually confided by the young man to the unfortunate girl whom his giddy sisters had selected as a favourite, and of whom they soon took no further note than as a menial paid to do their bidding, and pretty enough to do honour to their service; while Edward was only too glad to find an ear to listen to him, and an eye to look kindly on him, when he expressed his apprehensions of approaching banishment. He was ever loitering at home with Anna, instead of accompanying his sisters to their favourite scenes of dissipation; till, irritated by his negligence, the young ladies opened their eyes to the fact that their brother was too young, their favourite attendant too fair, to be left together with impunity. But, instead of doing justice to themselves and Ann

by instant dismissal, these spoiled children of fortune sealed the impending evil by dealing harshly with their *protegé*. They taunted, reprehended, nay, overwhelmed my poor sister with their scorn—(for, after all, what was she but their waiting-maid?)—till Edward fancied it incumbent on him to comfort the poor, weeping, mortified girl. In short, sir (for why delay the sequel?) Anna, while dreaming of becoming the young man's wife, and sailing with him for that eastern country of which he began to speak in raptures the moment he indulged a hope of her companionship, became in the first instance *his mistress;* and, when the rash caresses of the boy-lover accelerated the discovery of his secret, but one of the two was fated to pay the penalty of their mutual fault. The girl—'the good-for-nothing foreigner'—was turned out characterless, destitute, despairing; while his son was dispatched to England, on his way to the East, under the care of a clergyman, a friend of the family; the old Lord laughing heartily, and scarcely aside, at the notion that his favourite son had so early distinguished himself as a seducer.

"Such is the world, sir! Events that bring with

them shame, heart-break, death, eternal punishment, are jested upon by many as exploits deserving indulgence—perhaps applause; and while Anna, after concealing her miseries till the sad hour approached too nearly to be trifled with, wandered home to die,—to convey disgrace to an honest man's homestead, and despair to her wretched parents, — Edward proceeded triumphantly to his distant home, priding himself on the ruin he had achieved, and——"

"No, no, no!—you wrong him grievously!" exclaimed Vernon, no longer able to repress his emotions. "All that he *could* attempt he did. Subjected to the strictest control by the guardian imposed on me by my father, I wrote in every direction where I imagined that my poor Anna might have sought a retreat. I wrote again, and again, and again, and still no answer. Vain were my remonstrances, my tears. I was shipped off, under the influence of my father's authority, for Ceylon—banished beyond all hope of return. But believe me that, from the miserable hour we were torn asunder, my hopes, my thoughts were with *her*. I had no ambition but to secure a competence, return to Europe, make her my wife, and

sacrifice every more aspiring project to her happiness."

"*You!*"—exclaimed Lambert, starting from Vernon's side as from contact with some venomous reptile—"*you?* Are *you*, then, the seducer—*you* the destroyer; the man who bore down my sister's young head to the dust, and brought my father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave?—*You?*"—

And Vernon could only avert his face, and tacitly admit his guiltiness.

"And your poor deserted child!"—cried Lambert again,—"she whom, for her mother's sake, I have reared so tenderly, and of whom, for all these years, her wretched father demeaned himself not so far as to inquire!—the *waiting woman's child*—the——"

"Again I say you wrong me!" remonstrated Vernon, but in a tone of gentlest and most unresenting humanity. "All that I at first promised myself I strictly fulfilled, and thereby lurks a mystery which must be instantly sought out and elucidated.—Finding it impossible to gain a clue to Anna's place of shelter, I resigned myself as I might, to the duty of conquering an independence

to enable me to return to my native country,—visit France,—and prosecute my inquiries in person.—Instead of fulfilling my father's intentions by remaining in the East for the acquirement of a colossal fortune to impart lustre to a younger branch of the Vernon family, I contented myself with a third of the provision specified as indispensable to the dignity of my name, and returned in haste to Europe.

"Brief was my stay in my native country. In my own home I found all desolate. My father had expired during my passage; my elder brother, his successor, united in marriage with one of the haughtiest daughters of the aristocracy, received me almost as a stranger; my sisters were brilliantly established and presiding over scattered households of their own; my brothers were dispersed by the interest of their several professions. The mighty bond of family affection, in humble life so powerful and so consolatory, was wanting in the house of Vernon; and, instead of reuniting, from time to time, to compare mutually the brightness or blackness of their scroll of destinies, my brothers and sisters met no more, or met only amid the tumultuous pageantry of the great world.

From all this heartlessness I turned away. In eager hope I turned to France, where I trusted that my affianced wife might still survive, to realize a far warmer dream of human happiness. I visited Paris,—I consulted the records of the police,—I advertised in all the papers; but, alas! no Anna replied.—I examined every source of information, Lambert, but could gain no intelligence of your sister!—

"Driven to despair, I thought, at length, of visiting the *bourgeoise* from whose *magazin* my sisters had, in the first instance, withdrawn the unfortunate girl; and, after some demur, Madame Remond informed me that my repentance came too late,—that Anna had expired in giving birth to her child.

"'But that child, at least, survives?' was my first eager interrogation, on recovering the shock conveyed by this intelligence. And my informant not only replied in the affirmative, but that the little boy had ever since remained under her protection. On the following day, Clément was clasped in my arms, and acknowledged as my son!"

"Vile imposture!" exclaimed Lambert with

indignation. "From the moment Anna quitted that woman's roof, no communication had passed between them."

"Your narrative has convinced me," replied the Englishman, "that my over-eagerness has rendered me the dupe of villany. The boy to whom they saw me so willing to extend my heart and fortune, was doubtless some indigent relative of the Remonds, — a nephew or grandson, — for whom they thought it worth while to secure the advantages proffered by my inconsiderate frankness. I have reared him as my own, loved him as my own, loved him even with a wisdom of love enabling me to surmount the doting impulses of my heart. Instead of holding forth to my son prospects of a brilliant independence, I have given him a profession, instilled into his mind the love of occupation, and stimulated him to the exercise of his own brilliant abilities. Clément has fortunately already distinguished himself in a distinguished career; thrice fortunate for him now,— when I must learn to withdraw from him, not only the tender affection of which he has been the object, but the prospects of opulence to which another possesses a legitimate claim."

"To estrange your affections, wholly and at once, from one who has been unto you as a son," observed Lambert, "would be an afflicting effort. Since it is your intention to make my niece his wife, why not remove all difficulties by persisting in your project of uniting the young people?"

"Such a scheme requires deliberation," rejoined Mr Vernon, "I do not, for an instant, implicate my boy (still must I call him so!) in the iniquities of his relatives; but I must search out the mystery—perhaps expose, perhaps chastise, the offence. Nor am I altogether certain of the present state of my daughter's affections."

"On that point," interrupted Lambert, "entertain no further doubt. Now that I am enabled to connect together the events of the last eighteen months, I perceive that an attachment for Clément was the sole origin of all that has struck me as inconsistent in her conduct."

It was from the lips of his acknowledged daughter—the child of his beloved Anna—clasped within his arms and weeping on his bosom, that Mr Vernon obtained confirmation of an opinion which seemed to remove every obstacle to his happiness. Before he proceeded to summon the

young engineer to Pierrevau, he visited Paris; and, after giving vent to his just indignation at the imposture by which he had been defrauded, succeeded in obtaining from Madame Remond a confession that the child she had basely imposed upon him, was the orphan of her own daughter; —a destitute boy, in whose favour she had been unable to resist the temptation of appropriating those benefits promised by the lover of Anna.

Nor does it appear that the resentment of Mr Vernon was harshly prolonged; for six months had not elapsed from the period of his explanation with Lambert, when the young couple were settled at the Chateau de Massignac under the protection of their father and friend, with the grey-headed brother of Anna as their guest.

Felix, as the happy husband of Clairette, was already installed as lord and master of the station-house of the railroad, of which Clément had been appointed chief engineer; and Lambert rejoiced to quit Pierrevau,—busy, bustling Pierrevau,— and, seated with the hypochondriac Vernon in some shady recess of the gardens of Massignac, moralise over the past,—over the vicissitudes and troubles of human life,—the lights and shades of

human affection,—the prospects of a better world, a purer state of being; or, reverting from generalities to the details of their especial fortune, return thanks to Heaven for the singular providence which had guided Vernon to the grave of his Anna, and the abode of his long-alienated child, by engaging the professional labours of his suppositious son in the construction of the RAILROAD.

THE MARINERS OF THE POLLET.

CLOSELY adjoining the town of Dieppe in Normandy is a suburb called the Pollet, which, though divided from it by the estuary of a river scarcely a quarter the width of the Thames, differs as completely from the parent town in manners and customs, dialect and costume, as the capital of England from that of Spain.

The Pollet is supposed by historians to have been colonised by the crews of vessels from some Mediterranean port;* the dialect of the Polletais, or Poltais, containing a number of Italian words,

* In the letters patent, by which, in 1283, Philip III ceded to the Archbishop of Rouen his crown lands in the Pollet, the place is styled "*Villa de Poleto.*"

and resembling in idiom and pronunciation that of the Lazzaroni of Naples rather than the French language. Their original costume, also, is strictly Italian; and their bigoted superstition savours of Italian origin; while the barcarolles with which the mariners mark the measure of their oars as the fishing boats are rowed back into the harbour, might almost be mistaken for those of Venice; the letter *j* and *g* being pronounced by the Poltais as by the Venetians,—*z*.

The peculiarities of the tribe, thus strangely isolated, can of course have been preserved, through succeeding ages, only by force of strong prejudice and extreme superstition. It was inculcated as a matter of religious observance among them from sire to son, that a Poltais must match with a Poltaise, and that any deviation of costume was an offence against the community. Though a Poltais family might cross the harbour on the Sabbath to perform its devotions in the noble church of St Remy, or the cathedral of St Jaques (the patron of the fishermen, of which the population of the Pollet is entirely composed), yet, on occasions of such family celebrations as marriages or baptisms, they never

failed to solemnize their rites in their own humble chapel of Notre Dame des Grêves—a temple which might pass, belfry and all, through the porch of either of the Dieppois churches without bowing its head. If at times the town of Dieppe have arrived at high prosperity, and distinguished itself in the annals of the country, the Pollet has neither condescended to ape its fashions, nor to court, reflected from its face, a ray of royal sunshine or civic advancement. Mansions of considerable dignity have arisen in Dieppe, worthy to afford shelter to Napoleon and the Duchesse de Berri in their successive days of triumph. But the Pollet contains not a single house of mark; remaining composed (as in the days of the bombardment of Dieppe by the English in 1694) of a few narrow streets, inhabited by mariners and their families, and the petty tradesmen requisite to supply their wants. An ancient convent converted into a barrack, and a modern prison and house of correction, are the only buildings of consequence in the little suburb of the Pollet; which is comprised between the mouth of the harbour and the base of the chalky cliffs overlooking the junction of the river Dieppe with the sea.

Within a few years, indeed, the connexion between the town and suburb has been drawn closer by the construction of a *passerelle* or floating bridge, facilitating the intercourse of their respective inhabitants, long interrupted by the ruinous state of the ancient bridge of the Pollet. But till the middle of the last century, the differences between the Poltais and Dieppois amounted almost to the feuds of rival factions. The former appear, indeed, to partake of the fiery particles of those Castilian children of the sun from whom they are supposed by many to have their origin; while, as an instance of the violence of their opinions and doggedness of their obstinacy, it is related that D'Aubigne, Archbishop of Rouen, coming to preach at the church of St Remy in Dieppe, after having suspended from his duties one of the vicars of the Pollet suspected of inclining towards the reformed church, the Poltais, not choosing to be confessed by any but their favourite priest, proceeded in a body to the church, clambered up the rails of the chancel, and, with vehement threats and imprecations, drove the Archbishop from the celebration of the mass into the sacristy. In the sequel, the prelate was compelled to restore the

officiating vicar to his office, having departed furtively from the town in the dread that the contumacious Poltais might execute the threat of seizing the Archbishop and flinging him into the harbour over the bridge of the Pollet, which he must traverse in order to proceed to his visitations in Normandy.

About the year 1800, a small house in the Grande Rue of this curious suburb was in the possession of a family of the name of Crosnier, by one of whose forefathers it was constructed nearly two centuries before. Pierre Crosnier, the father, was accounted in his neighbourhood a wealthy man; being proprietor, not only of the aforesaid solid dwelling-house of stone, consisting of two stories and a *grenier*, but of a fishing-smack, known by the name of the Belle Gabrielle, esteemed the best weatherboat belonging to the port of Dieppe. The Crosniers were, in fact, a prosperous generation. It was recorded that the dwelling in the Pollet, having been completed scarcely twelve months before the great bombardment by which the town was destroyed and the principal inhabitants deprived of shelter, was hired at a high price by one of the notables as a refuge

for his family during the reconstruction of his own; and that, on quitting it two years afterwards to take possession of his new residence in the Rue de l'Epée, the tenant marked his satisfaction towards his host by endowing him with the household furniture wherewith he had replenished his abode. This might account for Crosnier's possession of two richly-carved *armoires*, or cupboards of oak, and two old-fashioned beds of walnut wood, with a set of high-backed chairs and cumbrous tables to match; which, together with a huge screen of gilt leather gracing the parlour, still commanded the admiration of the Pollet. But we must look to more recent sources of prosperity as the origin of the prodigious supply of household linen filling the *armoires* in question; to say nothing of the twelve clumsy *couverts d'argent*, and soup-ladle and coffee-spoons of the same material, which distinguished the board of Jacques Crosnier from those of his less wealthy brother mariners. The family was not only well to do in the world, but appeared uniformly prospered by the same good luck. It was calculated in the harbour that finer turbots were dispatched to the Paris market by the owner of the Belle Gabrielle than by all the other

fishermen of the Pollet; and the first haul of mackerel for the season, and first freight of herrings, was sure to reach the port from the nets of Pierre Crosnier.

The fisherman's family consisted of two sons; the elder, Jacques, being named after the holy patron of his calling, and the younger, Maxime, after his grandfather. His helpmate was a jolly soul, some four feet in circumference, whose ruddy brown complexion and comely countenance proclaimed that in her earlier days she had shared the toils of her husband, exposed to the scorching sun as retailer of his wares in the fish market. But Madame Crosnier enjoyed a distinction far beyond that conferred by her comely face, or the rich garniture of Valenciennes lace in which it was enveloped, or even by her rights as wife to a thriving house and ship holder. Madame Crosnier was, according to continental phrase, "*née Pierette Bouzard*," being daughter, sister, and aunt to those three remarkable mariners of Dieppe, who having, as pilots of the port, preserved from shipwreck and other maritime disasters more lives than the Hôtel Dieu has saved by its medicaments, were honoured by Napoleon with golden medals,

commemorating their prowess, and the free gift of a substantial dwelling-house, erected on the jetty for their hereditary use, and bearing the inscription, "*Don de la Patrie!*"—

The brother of Pierrette had even appeared at the court of Louis XVI to receive from the hands of Marie Antoinette the cross of St Louis as a reward for his services; and on his return from this visit to Versailles, honoured with the title of "*le brave homme*" by his royal hosts and their courtiers, Bouzard had undertaken the part of sponsorship for little Maxime Crosnier, now a flourishing lad of twenty-one.

On account, perhaps, of this auspicious circumstance, Maxime became a sort of pet in the family. It is true the boy bad fair to emulate the renown of his maternal kinsfolk, having distinguished himself by exploits of courage and address in the harbour, at an age when most youngsters are clinging to their mothers' apron-strings. But Maxime, in his blue woollen jacket and woollen cap, and trousers of coarse canvass, was seen one moment clinging to the maintop of some Norwegian sloop, and the next diving to the bottom after some object flung overboard by the crew as

an incentive to his attempts, till his adventurous spirit rendered him as great a favourite with the sailors of the Pollet, and the crews of the foreign merchantmen trading with Dieppe, as with his own parents.

The high spirit of Maxime was rendered more apparent by the inertness and taciturnity of his elder brother. Jacques Crosnier, though bred amid the perils and pastimes of seafaring men, displayed a natural distaste for his father's vocation, which grew with his increasing years. Old Bouzard, apprehensive, perhaps, that his grandson might in some case of emergency evince a want of hardihood discreditable to the family, at length backed the boy's entreaties to his father to be allowed to settle to some sedentary trade; and, after innumerable family dissensions, Jacques was apprenticed to an ivory-carver (a trade which for three centuries has afforded a monopoly to Dieppe, where, early in the sixteenth, it originated in the trade of the Dieppois with the gold coast, of which they were the first discoverers).

In his new calling the sober youth displayed capacities for which he obtained little

credit among his relations. A hardy, blustering race, they had no patience to see a fine likely lad weary out his days at a turning-lathe, or in scraping with a file at a slender piece of ivory, to form spillikens for the toyshops.

Even when, at the expiration of five years' close attention to his business, Jacques Crosnier was enabled to present to his mother, on her fête day, one of those full-rigged miniature frigates in ivory which constitute the *chef d'œuvres* of the trade, together with two exquisitely carved figures of our Lady and her patron Saint Peter, with his keys, to form a suite of ornaments for the mantel-piece of her state parlour, the jolly dame could not help attaching more value to the branches of coral and glossy shells brought home by Maxime from his first voyage to the West Indies, than to the elaborate productions of her more gifted first-born. Maxime, with his fine frank countenance and hearty disposition, still remained the favourite child.

Maxime, meanwhile, devoted to his brother the strongest affections of a warm and loving heart. Though the partiality injudiciously betrayed by their parents might afford some slight pretext for

the envy and jealousy of the elder brother, it should have been disarmed by the generosity with which Maxime, disdaining to profit by his influence, seized every occasion of displaying to advantage the talents and industry of Jacques, and bringing forward to the notice of the family his claims and deserts; still, Maxime enjoyed the Benjamin's portion. It was Maxime whom the old folks called to their side when, on Sundays or fête days, the family proceeded together to dance at the *guinguettes* of Jawval or Martin l'Eglise. It was Maxime's head on which, in childhood, they had been apt to bestow their first benediction; and it was Maxime's hand which, in dawning manhood, they sought as their support whenever there was rough work to be done, or a rough step to be overpassed.

Though strongly attached to the calling of his forefathers, Maxime's adventurous spirit could not long rest contented with the monotonous life of a Dieppe fisherman. Having succeeded in persuading his father that his place as simple mariner of the Belle Gabrielle might be easily filled up, he obtained permission to embark on board a lugger freighted for Havre, whence it was easy to work a

passage to the West Indies, with a view of improving his maritime experience, and seeing something of the world. From the West Indies, Maxime Crosnier proceeded to New York; and previous to his return to his native town, he had obtained such high testimonials for steadiness and good conduct, that two of the principal merchants of Dieppe, engaged in the north-western trade, contended to obtain his services at a higher rate of remuneration than had ever yet been offered on the quays of Dieppe. By the liberality of his father the same sum of money which had been advanced for the setting up in business of Jacques, was now bestowed upon him to invest in ventures presenting themselves in the course of his voyages; and the young man took leave of his parents for the second time in exuberant spirits, arising at once from his own happy prospects and the prosperous position of his brother.

For Maxime had successfully exerted his influence with his parents to obtain their sanction to the marriage of their elder son, whose *ateliers* as an *ivoirier* were established in the house adjoining their own in the Pollet; and though the young person to whom he had united himself was

come of a family with which the Crosniers had been formerly at variance, the persuasions of Max, and the prudent deportment of Madame Jacques, prevailed in inducing the old people to admit the newly-married couple as inmates under their roof. One of the chambers of the second floor was assigned to their use, leaving the other still sacred to the goods and chattels left behind by Maxime on embarking for his voyage. The *ivoirier* repaired every morning to his workshop, slipping home for meals and an occasional chat with his demure bride; and the old people not only reconciled themselves to the addition to their household, but were cheered by the constant spectacle of happiness and affection.

"Thou hast done thyself an ill turn, lad, by introducing to thy father's hearthside two that are little inclined to advance thy interests in life," cried Bouzard to his nephew, when Max went to take leave of his friends previous to sailing. "A word in thine ear, Max, my boy.—Thou wilt repent having given thy shoes to wear in thine absence to that bone-clipping brother of thine."

"Jacques hath as good a right as I to abide

under my father's roof," replied Maxime; "nay, *more*,—since *he* hath a wife to maintain, while I (thank God) have at present no mistress save fine weather."

"Thou wilt have a master soon, if I have any skill to read the compass," cried Bouzard. "Jacques is a smooth-spoken chap, able to palaver the eyes out of a man's head; as thou wouldst have known long ago to thy cost, but for the favour thou seemest to have brought with thee into the world thou wert born to. But smooth as he is, Max, he hath taken to himself a mate with fifty-fold his own cunning and make-believe. If Madame Jacques don't get the length of my sister's foot before the year's out, my name is not Jean Bouzard!—Mark, I beseech thee, Max, how artfully this woman hath already rigged herself from top to toe after the strictest fashion of a Poltais, instead of the gay fly-caps and body-gear she wore as a maiden; and not a word from her lips *now*, forsooth, that a soul t'other side the harbour is likely to understand!—'Tis not natural, Max, in a Dieppoise to whistle her words Pollet fashion. As our song says,—

'Moi, ze fais ma ronde
En Poltais racourchi,
Et tout au bout du compte
Ze n'ai qu'un mélan ouït!'

But I'm plaguily mistaken if Madame Jacques don't get more as her portion by pretending love for the Pollet than a stale whiting, or even her lawful half of thy father's belongings."

"I'm not apt to judge harshly those who are loved by those I love," cried Maxime. "I warrant, uncle, you'll have changed your mind about my sister-in-law by the time I'm home again!"

It was Maxime, however, who was fated to change his mind. Scarcely had the Amphitrite sailed, when Madame Jacques, who, by dint of the most artful obsequiousness, was now high in favour with the narrow-minded old Madame Crosnier, began to insinuate that it was a lucky thing for Maxime he was forced by his profession from Dieppe, as another month's sauntering among the bosquets of the Faubourg de la Barre would have placed him at the mercy of a certain Mademoiselle Louise, a coquette of indifferent reputation, the daughter of Swiss refugees, who, after a life of adventure in Paris, were fain to hide their

heads and their poverty at Dieppe, probably with a view of escaping from their creditors by embarking for England.

Madame Crosnier heard and trembled! It had been for many years her favourite project to unite her darling son with the only daughter of one of her *commères* of the Pollet,—her fellow-labourer of old with the shrimping-net and the *chalut*, and now her evening companion over a cup of *café noir*, or a glass of *anisette*. That Max should not only defeat her plan, but think of introducing into an honest family of the Pollet some tripping foreign minx covered with ribbons and furbelows, caused a flush of indignation to overspread her bronzed cheeks.

"This, then, was the reason that the blockhead could never be persuaded to spend his Sundays at home with us!" cried Madame Crosnier; "and no one to warn me of the danger that was hanging over the family! — *Sapristie!* — to think that I might have had a daughter-in-law pretending to sup my soup in a flounced petticoat,—and, who knows—perhaps a silken bonnet cocked on the top of her empty head!"

"You would not have wished my husband to injure his brother by hinting what was going on?" inquired Madame Jacques meekly.

"I would; and even now I will have him acquaint his silly boy of a brother in the letter he has undertaken to write for us to Max in the course of the winter (for God knows Pierre Crosnier and I are better hands with the rudder and distaff than with pens and ink!) that when he comes back to Dieppe, he must make up his mind either never again to set foot in the house of this foreign hussey, or never to re-enter his father's. There's choice left him, Madame Jacques, and that's enough."

This denunciation was duly transmitted to his brother by Jacques Crosnier, who undertook at the same time to exert his influence with his parents to procure a remission of the sentence previous to Maxime's return. Yet so far was this engagement from being fulfilled, that neither the *ivoirier* nor his wife omitted a single occasion to poison the ears of the old people with rumours and anecdotes redounding to the discredit of Ma'amselle Louise. They even eventually admitted their apprehension that—according to the common

reports of the neighbourhood—Maxime was actually pledged to marry the foreigner, and had only been restrained from communicating his intentions to his family, by dread of prematurely provoking their opposition.

"He is only waiting," quoth the demure Madame Jacques, "till his ventures have prospered, ere he takes unto himself a wife of his own choosing."

"That shall be seen," cried old Pierrette, in a fury. "Our lady be praised! children have as yet no warrant in France for rebellion against their parents!"

And having arrayed herself in her richest Sunday cap and amplest petticoat of scarlet kersey, she set off across the *pont des écluses*, and up the *cours*, towards the Faubourg de la Barre; where, having attained the modest habitation of the widowed mother of Louise, she poured forth her denunciations,—rendered almost inarticulate by the unusual effort of transporting her sixteen stone of solidity to the sunny slopes of La Barre. Had not the old lady's eyes been somewhat dazzled by the glare, as well as her respiration impeded by the exercise, she would have noticed that the fair

and humble girl, who, by her industry as a sempstress, was supporting a venerable parent, was a far different being from the flaunting coquette described by her artful daughter-in-law. But after having called the saints to witness that neither she nor her husband would ever sanction the marriage contract of their son Max with any but a Poltais, Madame Crosnier rushed forth again on her way homewards, without pausing to examine the result of her invectives, or the aspect of the Dumont family.

Overpowered by so strange an inbreak, the poor girl beloved by Maxime had in fact fallen senseless to the ground. Louise was a patient, laborious, gentle creature, the very person to have conciliated the regard of his mother, had she viewed her with unprejudiced eyes.

Madame Jacques's report of the engagement of the young couple meanwhile was a true bill—having been communicated in confidence to her husband by his brother, who intended to choose an auspicious moment at some future time for breaking the matter to his parents. But now, all hope of a favourable termination to the business was at an end. The Crosniers threatened their maledic-

tion in case of Maxime's perseverance; and the elder brother, satisfied that under such circumstances the high-spirited Max would neither complete nor relinquish his engagements with Louise, flattered himself that his junior must remain a bachelor to the end of his days, and that there would be no new rival to his influence in the Pollet.

The vessel in which Maxime Crosnier had departed, was at length seen in the offing, waiting for the tide that was to enable her to enter the harbour. According to the custom of the place, a pilot-boat instantly put off to communicate to the Dieppois captain the events that had occurred in the town during his absence, which *he* alone was privileged to announce to his crew. For while the deepest anxiety prevails on board a French homeward-bound ship among husbands waiting to know the welfare of their families, and children dreading to learn the loss of their parents, the men are summoned one by one to the cabin, and informed by their captain of the good or ill news awaiting them on landing.

As it happened, however, to be Jean Bouzard who, on the present occasion, hailed the *Amphitrite*,

the captain consented to allow him the favour of a personal interview with his nephew, her second mate; and in a moment, Maxime Crosnier was in the arms of his uncle.

"All's over for thee, lad;—"cried the mariner, after having satisfied the young man of the health of his family; "that which I predicted hath come to pass. A serpent hath knotted herself round thy mother's heart; and thou must prepare to give up all intercourse with thy *bonne amie*, Louise Dumont, or re-enter thy father's house no more—*et voilà!*

Maxime's heart, which was still beating with the delight of being again pressed to the bosom of his kind good uncle, sank like lead at this afflicting announcement. Further explanations did but aggravate his despair.—"Thy foolish mother charged me to be the bearer of these evil tidings," said Bouzard. "Now, thou art warned of the worst. Ask me for no counsel;—for, on the soul of an honest seaman, Max, I know not how to advise thee, since I cannot guess how far thou art committed with the girl. But unless thou art minded to give her up, hazard no meeting at present with thy father and mother; for there is no saying

to what extremities their vexation may urge them."

This declaration was soon painfully attested. Amid the hundreds who thronged the jetty to catch the first sight of the long absent ones, as the good ship the *Amphitrite* was towed into the harbour, no one came to welcome Maxime Crosnier. Louise and her mother were weeping silently at home. They dared not make their appearance on the quay, lest they should seem to confront the wrath of his parents; while Madame Crosnier and her spouse were watching anxiously, yet sullenly, from their window in the Pollet, waiting the event of their negotiation with their son.

The result was, that Maxime made no attempt to re-enter his father's abode. A tear sprang into his eye as he steered past the *Belle Gabrielle* in the harbour, and inferred, from the manner in which the good old craft lay neglected, that his father had no longer heart to superintend his property. But he slept that night under the roof of his uncle Bouzard, after spending an evening of intermingled joy and affliction with his affianced wife; and having learned in detail to what excess his parents were carrying their exasperation,

entreated his uncle to acquaint them on the morrow with his determination to wait the influence of time upon their prejudices, but his fixed resolve to wed with no other wife than the excellent Louise Dumont.

Madame Crosnier meanwhile, who, in spite of all, was burning with impatience to clasp her rebellious but darling son in her arms, would have been unable to persist in her obduracy, had not her insidious daughter-in-law laboured to convince her that the eyes of the Pollet were fixed upon her proceedings, expecting an example from her firmness. Madame Jacques had already succeeded in obtaining an express interdiction, on pain of paternal malediction, of all intercourse between Jacques and his brother; and now filled up every spare moment with reports of disrespectful language uttered by Maxime against his parents; and insinuations that, in the filial duty of her own little boy, the grandfather and grandmother would find consolation for the contumacy of their ungrateful son.

It is astonishing, when once a family feud is established, what pains are taken by neighbours, not otherwise ill-meaning, to widen the breach!

A few of the relations of the designing Madame Jacques — a few of the disappointed rivals of Maxime — a few of those who found it convenient to court the rising sun of the *ivoirier* and his wife,— and not a few who, for want of better employment, amused themselves with stirring up the wrath of old Pierrette,—contrived so bitterly to aggravate, in the course of the next six weeks, the ill-will of the parties, that Maxime, who had determined, previous to his return, to spend the winter at home, in order, if his parents' consent could be obtained, to solemnise his marriage with a wife whom the success of his ventures already afforded him the means of maintaining, now acceded to the proposals of the owner of the *Amphitrite*, and accepted the command of one of the fine vessels which were about to sail for the codfishery on the coast of Newfoundland.

It was noticed that, on the week preceding the sailing of the little fleet, Maxime, as well as Madame Dumont and her daughter, were missing four days from Dieppe. Some said they were gone to Rouen on an excursion of pleasure; some said to Havre; and one or two, recollecting that Louise and her mother were of Swiss origin,

whispered that perhaps Maxime Crosnier had suffered himself to be converted to the Reform church; and that the young people were gone to get furtively married according to the rites of the Lutheran church, of which, in many cities of Normandy, there exist congregations.

It was fortunate for Maxime that he was already out of port before this rumour reached the ears of his parents, or even of his uncle Bouzard, who was a bigoted and superstitious Papist. But before Madame Jacques found occasion to repeat the tale, Maxime was gone, and the Dumonts gone also. The mother and daughter having sold off their scanty furniture, had retired to the village of Arques, probably to be beyond reach of the animosity of the Crosnier family, and to subsist upon the funds left with them by Maxime.

It is not to be supposed that Jacques Crosnier (though his jealousy of his brother was stimulated a thousand fold by the unconcealed misery of his parents at losing sight of their favourite son) could consent without scruple to all the malpractices of his wife. It was only by pleading hypocritically the cause of the two infants of

whom she was now the mother, and representing that, should Maxime once re-obtain a footing in his father's house, he would inevitably retaliate upon *them* and procure their expulsion,—that Madame Jacques obtained his co-operation. They had gone too far to recede; and he silenced his conscience by reminding himself that all stratagems were lawful to secure his brother's salvation, by preventing his marriage with a Protestant. Still, when at the close of the five months, which usually formed the limit of the absence of the Newfoundland fleet, Bouzard took his station every morning, glass in hand, upon the jetty, and announced that the *Terre-Neuviers* were not yet in sight, the heart of the elder brother began to wax heavy.

Six months passed away—the seventh was advancing—and still no tidings. On the Exchange of Dieppe not a broker could be found to listen to the proposals of the owners. Bouzard was to be seen from sunrise to nightfall, watching upon the *falaise;* and old Crosnier and his wife spent their lives on their knees at the foot of the Calvary erected on the jetty. Already they had vowed an offering of a full-rigged frigate in ivory to the

shrine of Notre Dame des Grêves in the event of Maxime's return; and would have rushed to clasp the truant in their arms, even had he presented himself holding the hand of a Protestant wife. But it was fated that Maxime should come no more. In the eighth month, a letter from Prince Edward's Island apprized the associated owners of the Newfoundland fleet, that, having been dispersed by a frightful storm, four of the vessels had reassembled in the most distressed condition, and with great difficulty made for the nearest port to refit; the *Pearl*, the fifth vessel, having foundered at sea. Of the *Pearl*, the fated fifth, had Maxime Crosnier the command!—The vessel had been seen for the last time at nightfall, on the 30th of December, battling with the rising tempest, and Maxime was then on the deck, encouraging the men, and exerting unexampled energies in working his dismasted ship. On the arrival of the *Terre-Neuviers* in the harbour, amid the acclamations of multitudes who had dreaded never to behold their entrance into the port of Dieppe, it was a sad thing to see the widows and orphans of those who were lost in the *Pearl* crowding to interrogate

their surviving comrades, and obtaining from *all* the same answer, that the poor *Pearl* could not have lived half an hour in such a sea as that of the 30th of December, after she was last seen by her convoy.

No one, however, appeared to make further inquiries after Max. Old Crosnier was on his deathbed, and his family in anxious attendance upon his last moments; and it was noticed that though the tidings of the loss of his son had broken the heart of the old man, yet so obstinately did he cling to the hope of Maxime's survival, to reappear at some future moment, that no persuasions of the notary employed by the *ivoirier* and his wife could induce him to frame his last will and testament, otherwise than by bequeathing his whole property to his wife for her lifetime, with a request that she would divide it by will between his representatives. It was conjectured by the disappointed Jacques that his uncle Bouzard had some share in suggesting this absurd disposition; and vexation was gnawing at his heart when, with outward signs of grief, he followed his father to the grave, and remembered that, for her life, his mother must retain her authority.

Nevertheless, so thoroughly was Madame Crosnier's spirit broken by the loss of her husband and son, that it was easy for the *ivoirier's* wife to obtain sole ascendancy in the house in the Pollet. Half the old woman's time was spent in that long-closed chamber of the second floor, which still contained a few personal tokens of her beloved Max—foreign shells and feathers, and Indian implements and toys, which the poor old mariner had chosen to have laid upon his death-bed, that he might stretch his wasted hand over something that had once belonged to his boy. Amid these treasures, and opposite to a rough canoe of birch-bark, the handiwork of the ship-wrecked man, would the venerable Pierrette sit for hours, wandering back into the past, reviling her own hardness of heart towards her Maxime, and grieving that not one of the tame-hearted, cunning children of her son Jacques should, in the slightest degree, recal to mind the brave, rebellious, curly-headed varlet who, twenty years before, used to tag after her along the shore of the Pollet, watching for the return of the *Belle Gabrielle*. The *Belle Gabrielle*

was sold to a stranger; and the little curly-headed lad a senseless corse beneath the howling waves of the Atlantic! No wonder that the afflicted mother should weep and bemoan herself. No wonder that Madame Jacques, impatient of her continued control in the house, should reproach her with indifference towards her more deserving and still surviving son.

Weary of these constantly recurring remonstrances, and anxious to conceal her tears, Madame Crosnier was apt to wander out from the Pollet on summer evenings; sometimes along the cliffs, as if she still expected that a future fleet of *Terre-Neuviers* might include the long-lost *Pearl*, but oftener, along the green valley of the Scie and the Saane. On one occasion, about four years after the loss of her husband, the poor old soul, no longer comely, no longer oppressed with *embonpoint*, was taking her sad and solitary way through the silence of a dreary September evening up the ascent leading to the cemetery of the Pollet, without noticing that, before her on the road, toiled a poor woman heavily charged with one of the wicker hods of the country, who now

and then turned round to look after a little fellow as raggedly accoutred as herself. At length, a few paces in advance of Madame Crosnier, she paused to call the boy, who was seeking berries in the hedge; and the name by which she addressed her child went straight to the heart of the sorrowing mother.—*It was Max!*—

"How art thou called, little one?" inquired Madame Crosnier, taking the hand of the boy, when, tardily obeying the call, he at length followed his mother, who was proceeding at some distance along the road.

"My name is Maxime Crosnier—but I am only called Max. Now let me go, for I am tired and hungry; and mother has promised that if I step out, perhaps she will give me a bit of bread for supper."

"And where is thy mother?"—persisted the agitated Pierrette.

"She is yonder there, at the top of the hill."

"Thou hast a father, perhaps?"—persisted the old lady, in a faltering voice.

"Yes."

"And where is thy father?"

"Far away, under the sea. My poor father

was lost by shipwreck; and granny is dead, and though mother works very, *very* hard, it is not always we can get food."

Madame Crosnier sat down on the bank by the way-side, without relinquishing the hand of the child, who stood wondering by her side.

"What was thy grandmother's name?" — she continued, in a scarcely audible whisper, dreading that the reply might crush the delightful hopes already dawning in her heart; and when poor little Max breathed in her ear the name of "Dumont," the sobs with which she threw her arms around him, and then, placing him at arm's length, considered and reconsidered his handsome, intelligent little face, so terrified the boy, that he soon mingled his tears with those of his unknown relative. "Thou art *his*—thou art *mine*—thou shalt *remain* with me!" cried the poor old soul,—who, at the moment, felt as if one restored from the dead were folded in her arms; and while the boy struggled to extricate himself from her embraces, his mother, having returned along the road to seek her lost treasure, stood beside them in utter amazement. The explanation that ensued was heart-rending. The wasted cheek and callous

hands of poor Louise attested the tale of her sufferings, her wants, her labours, for the sake of Maxime's son. After the death of her mother, she had made known to Jacques Crosnier her situation, and the lawfulness of her wedlock with his brother; yet, at the instigation of his partner, the churl had not only refused her relief, but prevented her tale from reaching the ear of his mother. The widow of Max had been led to believe that, if she presented herself before the family of Maxime, both she and her idolized boy would be exposed to injury and insult. Sheltering herself, therefore, in the obscure village where her mother had breathed her last, she devoted herself submissively to the severest daily labour. Her comfort was in her child. It was sufficient for her consolation to breathe the name of "Max," and to find it answered by the sweet voice and fair looks of one who was the living portrait of the lover of her youth.

In the dusk of that eventful evening, the two sorrowing women returned together to the Pollet; and from that night scarcely lived one hour apart, till the sister of Bouzard was laid in the grave. Together they wept over him they had lost—

together related to the young child the prowess and feats of his father. Old Pierrette felt that she could not lavish sufficient love and affection upon this recovered treasure,—this morsel of her favourite son,—this image of her darling Max; and old Bouzard was scarcely less delighted to perceive that the boy was likely to become a worthy representative of his favourite nephew. From the startling moment of Madame Max's appearance in the Pollet, under the protection of her mother-in-law, Jacques and his wife, as if hoping by submission to disarm inquiry and silence invective, gradually withdrew from the place, and established a household of their own; more especially on perceiving that Madame Crosnier, instead of shuddering at the heresies of her daughter-in-law, exerted herself with success to establish the legality of Louise's marriage, in order to bestow upon her grandson his lawful share of the property of his forefathers.

The two oaken presses of the mansion of the Pollet are accordingly now disunited, and the twelve silver *couverts* have diminished to six; for Pierrette, great as was to the last her adoration of the Max of her own Max, was strictly just in

her division of her belongings between her two grandsons. According to the desire of the widow Jacques, her eldest son received in money, from his grandmother, an equivalent for the family dwelling, and is now a flourishing tailor in the town of Dieppe. But the jolly mariner, who may be seen to this very hour upon the quays, in affectionate discourse with his cousin, the Bouzard of the present day, and who inhabits, with a pretty, merry, little wife, and a grave but happy old mother, a house in the Grande Rue of the Pollet (the windows of which are bright with geraniums, and seem to be alive with linnets and canaries), is no other than Maxime Crosnier!

His children still delight in showing to strangers the shells and curiosities gathered in foreign parts by their shipwrecked grandfather; and the family may be visited and regarded by travellers as an advantageous specimen of the Mariners of the Pollet.

END OF VOL. II.

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